The Child
and
The Home

by

BENZION LIBER
M. D., Dr. P. H.

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"A free and happy childhood."

Francisco Ferrer.

The Child and the Home

Essays on the Rational Bringing-Up of Children

By BENZION LIBER, M. D., Dr. P. H.

Editor "RATIONAL LIVING"

Published by Rational Living
61 Hamilton Place
New York

200

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FEB 17 1922

TO

The beloved, modest, original, deep-thinking, open-minded, talented and faithful companion who has collaborated with me in spirit as well as in reality; who, through her simplicity and generosity, has made my work possible; who has always been a great source of inspiration to me and who has helped me to give shape to many thoughts expressed in this book.

THE AUTHOR.

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

Some of the chapters of this book have appeared independently in various periodicals during the last few years. Therefore, some repetitions are unavoidable, although I have done my best to eliminate them.

I expect that many a reader will have something to say against the ideas here expressed, even though they are far from being new. In the next edition I shall try to answer all worth while objections which will be brought to my attention.

Being a parent and having been a school teacher in my younger days, I recognize that it is not easy to be rational with children in an irrational world. It requires a constant inner struggle, much self-criticism and self-education. But those who are in earnest and willing to learn, will soon overcome the worst difficulties.

November 14, 1921.

Dr. Liber has sent me his book on the care of children, and I have read the work with the greatest interest. The book is full of all kinds of helpful advice to parents, and I do not see how any one can read it without profit. It is evident that the writer has watched children carefully, and thought about them both with intelligence and with love. His health advice is excellent, and his talks on the subject of sex are exactly right. It is a pleasure to be able to recommend a book from which people will derive so much profit.

Of course, no one could write such a book expecting that any other man would agree with every word of it. Dr. Liber has sensibly offered to answer objections from his readers, so I will supply him with one subject of discussion. I think he is too absolute in his statement to the effect that children never by any possibility need to be punished. This is one of those broad, general statements which are born of our beautiful feelings about life, but which cannot always

be carried out in practice. We wish to recognize that children are human beings, and to treat them with dignity and love; but alas, sometimes we discover that children are little wild animals, and we have to compel them to change their natures suddenly.

I think it would be an easy matter to demonstrate that in this very imperfect and ugly world it is sometimes necessary that children should be compelled to obey their parents, and to obey quickly and without discussion. For example, in our cities children have to play in the streets because they have nowhere else to play, and if a parent has to teach a very young child not to go off the sidewalk into the street, the parent may find it impossible to make the child understand the distinction between sidewalk and street, and the enormous importance of this distinction. The parent may reflect that it would be far less cruel to bruise that child's hands with a switch, than to have the child's bones crushed by an automobile truck.

In the same way, I found with my boy when he was a year or two old, that he had to play in a room with an open fire-place. Of course it is a monstrous and horrible thing that a child should be brought up in the presence of an open fire-place; it is as if he had to live in the room with a devouring demon. But we lived in an old farm house, and there was no other way to heat it, so I deliberately took this little boy and burned his finger with a match, so as to teach him fear of fire. I remember vividly how the child's mother cried, and how very cruel it seemed, but it had the effect of making sure that that baby would never go

too close to the open fire-place, and never play with matches. Dr. Liber will have to explain how he would advocate solving such a problem. If he answers that he would reason with the child, I point out to him that he could never be sure the child might not disobey, and one act of disobedience might cost the child's life. By my act of "cruelty", I made an impression on the child's subconscious mind which the child could n e v e r disobey, or even forget.

My rules regarding punishment would be more complicated than Dr. Liber's. I should say, first, that we should never use compulsion where, by any possibility, we can use reason, and not until we have given reason a thorough trial. We should use just as little compulsion as possible, and we should watch carefully its effect upon the child. For example, I found that my little boy was of a high-strung disposition, and physical punishment excited him violently. But when he had misbehaved himself, I put him on a chair and compelled him to sit there and think it over until he was sorry, and this always solved the problem perfectly. I fully agree with Dr. Liber that it is a bad idea to make children obey—except when it is necessary. But when it is necessary, then I think they should obey, and obey promptly, and above all things they should learn that when the occasion for obeying arises, there will be no possibility of their getting out of it by argument or delay.

Maybe Dr. Liber will be so hurt by these ideas, that he will not appreciate my praise of other things

in his book! At any rate, however, my objections will help him to clear up his own ideas, and perhaps to answer in advance objections which will be sure to come to him.

UPTON SINCLAIR.
Pasadena, California.

From the author:

I expect such disagreements. My book may not have been able to convince Mr. Sinclair that all punishments as punishments are wrong, but it may have more luck with others. At all events, if it provokes thinking and discussion on the subject of children's bringing-up, I am fully satisfied.

Mr. Sinclair's objection has been answered in advance in the book. But I wish to add a few words.

Even if the parents were always perfectly intelligent and reasonable human beings, if there were no doubt as to their mental superiority over the child, if they were surely right in the discords arising between them and their children, I would not think that children should ever be "compelled to obey" their parents "quickly and without discussion", that is—just as soldiers are supposed to obey their officers. Such children would become, as many do, liars and hypocrites and totally or partially mechanical men with greatly atrophied and much debilitated thinking power.

All the children know the difference between the sidewalk and the street. It is not difficult to explain

to a normal child that the sidewalk is safe because the vehicles do not run there. The children learn that themselves and anyone watching them impartially will find that they are quite careful even if they do not show it. Of course, accidents happen. But don't they happen to adults, to parents? A very small child is usually not left alone and should not be left alone in the streets without oversight. But even he can be told and explained and, barring an evident and imminent great danger for his life, as pointed out in the book, there is no need of using force and there is *never* any need of bruising his hand. Whenever possible and as long as possible, I would leave the small child alone, under my supervision, even in such cases.

Years ago I used to watch the children of kindergarten age in Mrs. Ferm's famous little play and school room in New York. An unprotected red hot stove was standing in the middle of the room and the children ran and danced around it as savagely as they could. Nobody reminded them to be careful; but they never burned themselves. I have seen children playing in many places near hot stoves and open fire places, without the slightest mishaps. Usually things do not happen as we, grown-up people full of suspicions and too much prevision, foresee them. Again, sometimes a child may burn himself. But how about the wise and experienced old people? Are they exempt from such mistakes?

To teach the child that fire is hot by forcibly burning his fingers with a match, is not only cruel, but is not efficient. If the child is very young, he may

not see the similarity between a match and an open fire-place. If he is older, he does not need such humane warnings.

Just as an inoculation of a disease with a needle, although it produces symptoms, is not a proof that the disease, when acquired in the usual way, will result in the same symptoms, so your match is not convincing to me and probably much less to a very little child. He may think that he knows how to be careful with the fire-place, even if he could not fight against you and even if he must submit to your punishment inflicted beforehand,—where, by the way, you are not as kind as blind nature would be. She logically waits with her punishment until she . . . judges that it is deserved.

When your child "had misbehaved himself"—which usually means that the parents had misbehaved themselves—you "put him on a chair and compelled him to sit there and think it over until he was sorry." *He may have told you that he was sorry, but how can you be sure that he was not glad to have "misbehaved"?*

Yes, it is easy for radicals to speak about liberty, but the real test for their love of liberty is in their relations with children.

FIRST PART

Fundamental Errors

1909

Civilization has complicated everything so much, has entangled so much every side of our life, public and private, social and individual, that we must spend more time in simplifying and disentangling matters and in destroying errors and superstitions, than in constructing and building new values. The simpler, the more direct, the more rational, the more appealing to common sense your opinions are the more you will be misunderstood, the more you will be considered a fool or a crank.

This is even more true when you are not satisfied with preaching your ideas, when you try to live them. But there is no other way to propagate unpopular ideas than to apply them in practice. Action speaks a stronger language than the most eloquent speech. To live according to your convictions is the real meaning of that much abused phrase, "Propaganda of the deed." Therefore, the conservative man who does not depart from his principles, deserves more esteem than that ultra-radical, who has only declamatory, boasting and empty promises for the future generations, but

who to-day does not differ in the least from his philistine neighbor.

The same holds true in the bringing-up of your children. Your theories count for nothing if you cannot put them into practice.

The astonishing thing which we discover when we live up to our ideas is—that it is easier than we imagine or than we expect it. In spite of all the hardships against which we have to fight, we feel at once as if delivered from jail or from slavery. We do not have to make believe, we do not have to try to please, we do not have to submit to all of the hundreds of conventionalities accumulated since centuries, and we feel happier.

The greatest obstacle in our way toward a better order of things is the wrong method in which we have been brought up. Our whole civilization rests upon that method. If Archimedes was right in saying: "Give me a lever and I shall lift up the world," we may say: "Give me the child and I shall lift up the world."

Why is it so difficult to make the people listen to new or uncommon ideas? Is it not largely because we have been brought up to become slaves of the current thoughts and principles and to follow the easiest way—the line of least resistance? Why is it so difficult to free humanity from economic oppression? Is it not because of our education of submission?

Let us forget all the theories on education and talk plainly about the situation of the child in his parents' home and about his rational bringing-up in his normal surroundings. For that purpose we do not need to

quote from Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Herbart, Robin, Key, Dewey, Montessori, etc. It is sufficient to use common sense, although this is so uncommon an article.

Here is a hypothetical question: What would we do if we had not been influenced by any of the numerous beliefs, superstitions and prejudices imposed upon us by society—what would we do with our child? Let us imagine for a moment that this is possible. Would we let the child free—to play happily when and how he feels like—or would we prohibit him to do so because, under certain circumstances, he may look "savage" or "impolite"? Would we answer his questions as far as our knowledge would permit us, or would we tell him an untruth or withhold from him what we know, under the pretense that it is harmful to know the answer? Would we consider his original opinions worth while, would we respect his will, or would we have him do everything against his will in order to please society?

Is it not probable that we would follow the most logical and rational way and let the child as free as possible?

I do not know whether education must begin, as it has been said, with the great grandparents. But I am convinced that we ought to make our plans before the child is born. Therefore, I feel that I cannot omit from my introductory remarks this preliminary rule which I believe extremely important:

In order to bring up your children correctly and conscientiously, the first thing to keep in mind is *not to*

have too many of them. Never forget that you must give to all of them, besides food, clothes and shelter, also your intellectual energy and your time.

Be like the bird; prepare the nest first and do not have more little ones than you can afford. If you can have but a small nest, do not overcrowd it.

Nor is this a temporary rule, good only now, for our miserable social conditions. I claim that even an ideal society could be ruined without control and restraint in the production of offspring.

Of course, this rule imposes itself even more on those who do not like children or who feel no desire to have them; such people should do everything to prevent them, as otherwise they would be bad parents.

What the child almost always lacks in his home is: 1) freedom, 2) truth, 3) respect for his individuality.

You may profess the greatest love of liberty in your public life. You may be a revolutionist, a fiery speaker, a clever writer, a talented agitator, an able organizer. If you do not allow your child any freedom at home, if you lie to him, if you do not respect his will, if your private life is not in accordance with your ideas, you are a conservative, or, perhaps, a reactionary. You are not worthy to have a child.

Often the only chance you find to rule somebody, to be a master, is in your relations with your child. And you, who protest with your utmost power against despotic rulers, are using this opportunity to become a czar in miniature.

When I hear of a great man or of a famous teacher whose ideas appeal to me, I try to inform myself of the following things: How he makes a living and *how he treats children*—his own or other children.

To define freedom in education is as difficult as to give a definition of freedom in general. But a definition is unnecessary; we all know how much freer we could be without infringing upon somebody else's liberty, if we were liberated from the terrible powers pressing us from all sides. In the same sense our children could be infinitely freer and happier than they are now, without encroaching upon the rights of others.

It is easy to reply to those who criticize the rational bringing up of children. Often the answer is contained in the objection.

Some think that freedom in education means no education at all. Others contend that it signifies no discipline, forgetting the much more important self-discipline taught by liberty in all its aspects. Still others say the reason our rational principles are faulty is that they are based on the supposition that all the children are "good" or that they are born "good," and so we make no effort to improve them. A further argument is the belief that "too much" freedom renders the future men and women unable to adapt themselves to society, while the aim of education should be to teach us how to live with our fellow men.

As to goodness, I must confess that I do not know what it is and I defy any one to prove me that any action is good or bad. It all depends upon the purpose

to which that so-called quality is applied, and there are many criteria, according to circumstances. In my youth, for many years, I was naive enough to look for the significance of "good" and "bad" and not only did I give up the problem as impossible to be solved, but I became convinced that a solution was unnecessary. I have not met a man who knew more than I do in this regard, although I have met many who pretended to know. Why then should I call anybody, child or adult, "good"?

As to considering adaptation to other people a purpose in education, I am of the opinion that it is the most unfortunate principle we can find. *The purpose of bringing-up in all its phases should be to make the child as happy as possible* and we can reach that by allowing his individuality to develop as freely as possible.

If adaptation means the natural finding of our place amidst the places occupied or to be occupied by other human beings, there is no need of any artificial training for that. In normal men (and I speak of normal children and adults only) it comes by itself; it is the result of a sort of balance of forces.

If adaptation is to be forced, unnatural, it is preferable that one should remain unadapted, as such an adaptation would mean the loss of our best qualities, it would mean to sacrifice , to annihilate the most original part of our ego. And the result for society? A society consisting of colorless, characterless, soft, gray, dead men; a society that does not and will not make any progress.

What interests us in the individual and what makes for progress of society? Certainly not those qualities by which we are alike, but those by which we differ from one another. The first difference between one monkey and the other was the beginning of humanity. For numberless centuries the life of primitive men remained unchanged, as long as none arose who showed an appreciable dissimilarity from the rest, a slight departure physically or mentally, in his behavior with his fellow beings or in the use of his surroundings. We owe our present intellectual treasures not to the countless generations of those undifferentiated individuals who were born, existed or vegetated and died without leaving any trace in the world; but to those who dared to be otherwise than the immense, formless mass, in the midst of which they lived and which ridiculed them, mocked them, stoned them, crucified them. From the smallest, most unknown person with some character, who has shocked his family by his "queer", "eccentric", that is, original deeds or thoughts, to the great heroes and martyrs of science, truth, rationalism, philosophy, they all, and they only, have their share in molding our progress.

Our parents did not want us to acquire our own individuality, they wanted us to resemble them. If we had satisfied their desire, we would be similar to them, and if we will not allow our children to work out their personality, they shall be like our parents. If this continues incessantly, there can be no hope for a change.

By freedom of speech we do not mean freedom to

express only those opinions which are tolerated by the authorities; by freedom in art we mean the right to produce art works according to the most unpopular principles. Just as freedom is needed whenever we want to see a soul express itself, so freedom is an essential requirement for education.

If we are for liberty, we must allow the individual traits in men to exist. If we are for progress, we must encourage them and do all in our power for their development.

I hear the objection that under present conditions —this is the typical excuse of the cowardly and lazy semi-"radical" — we cannot bring up our children freely and rationally, we are too poor, too powerless. This is not true; most of our errors in this respect have nothing to do with our social-economic situation. Besides, the rich, who are economically independent and who are the masters in present society, commit the same or worse errors in their relations with their children. The education of the rich children are based on the same false principles as that of the poor children.

No, you do not only make mistakes here and there. You, parents, are most of the time unjust toward your children; your whole system of bringing them up is wrong; it is almost always one big mistake from the beginning to the end.

It is a great error to believe that childhood in itself is "not so important"; that it is but a preparatory passage to manhood or womanhood. No; it is not any more a transitory age than any other period of our

life, and the child is just as important as the man and the woman.

The aim of education should not be to make of the child a future man, or, as they say, a future "good citizen." He is somebody now. I see in the boy and the girl a man and a woman of 5 or of 8, with their characters, their rights, which may differ from those of the adult, but which we should recognize and respect.

We should strive to make this little man or woman as happy as possible now, and not only to prepare them for later happiness, especially since in their mature age their life may be filled with terrible struggle and suffering.

The future will take care of itself, and, as a result of rational education, it will do so most of the time in a very satisfactory manner: The child will be well prepared to be a real man and society will be composed of fine men and fine women—an ideal society, resting on the best foundations.

The majority of the so-called well-meaning and well-thinking, but in reality unthinking people, will not permit the child to find out anything by himself, without their aid. If the child gets his own experience, and discovers many new things, it is with difficulty and in spite of his caretakers, it is because these cannot occupy themselves enough with their offspring,—which is really good for the young generation and partly its salvation.

Most parents will not give the child even an occasion to ask questions or to fail, to make mistakes, which

is so necessary in order to learn. They will attract his attention to everything, believing that by so doing they fulfill a great duty: "This is a bird," "This is hot," "This is cold," "Sit straight or you'll fall from the chair," "Hold your hammer this way" . . . .

Very often the adults object to the *methods* used by the child in order to do a certain work and they force him to adopt their methods. Why cannot the child invent new ways or choose new courses? I have seen parents get excited because the child did not accept their manner of making the neck-tie and others becoming wild because their boy went first to the grocer and then to the milkman instead of having done the reverse, as ordered.

You may tell me the child should learn from our experience. You may also tell me that, if I am right, we should speak neither about schools nor about the bringing-up of children, as they would be unnecessary.

But it is not true that we can learn the most vital notions from somebody else's experience, and I may say that what one learns in school should not be confused with the things to be learned in the intercourse with the family members at home. School education has only partly to do with the development of the true personal character of the young, and the school subjects constitute in the best case tools to be used in life. Instruction does not always go hand in hand with character. A very learned professor may lack character and an illiterate peasant may be a fine character with a strongly accentuated ego.

Stop a moment and think what could happen if you

would permit your child to hurt himself, and whether this may not be from time to time desirable. If you can be impartial, you will readily admit that it is even necessary.

Why is it that, no matter how much we "teach" our children and we give them, unsolicited, the results of our experience, they continue to burn themselves, to cut themselves, to fall from chairs, etc.? And these things happen to all the children. The reason is, these are things that none learns when told to learn them, and only a bad psychologist of children can advocate such kind of "teaching."

Besides, it is ridiculous to talk about the "experience" of the adult. We see that he, too, notwithstanding his so-called experience, cuts himself, burns himself, breaks glasses, falls down from high places and kills himself often enough through his own fault.

The freer a child has been brought up the more personal experience he will gain and the more careful he will be.

It is a mistake to deprive the child of his chance—often pleasure, sometimes pain, but necessary pain—to learn as much as possible by himself at the time when he wishes to learn it.

One of the most unfortunate results of that mistake is that it contributes to destroy that precious treasure possessed by the child—his individuality—or that it does not allow his character to develop. Indeed, after some time of such teaching, the child will be more like you than like himself.

Do the parents, as a rule, ask the child even when

he can have an opinion, for instance, at 5 or 6, whether he approves of the color or of the form of the clothes bought for him? Don't they force their taste upon him? Or do they, the masters, give him at least a reason why they prefer these or those garments? No!

How often do they dress their child like a circus monkey! Is it not because they regard him as a plaything, to be used for their own amusement?

How can we expect that children brought up in such a manner should become men with personal tastes and ideas who shall create things?

One does not need to be a deep student to find out that some people do not allow their child to do even such things which could have no bad results. They do not permit them by habit or because they must always let the child feel that they are the masters. And not seldom have I heard these words: "Why, if I should let him do everything, he would become bad"; or "I must show him that I am above him."

Many people do not permit the child to play here or to go there, in the house, not realizing that their house belongs to the child as well, and that his occupation is to play.

Sometimes we transform that which ought to be the best time for the child into an opportunity to make him suffer. For instance, a walk with the parents on a Sunday; how beautiful this could be! But what stiff clothes the child is made to wear! And how he must be careful to walk straight, still, orderly, nicely, not to jump, not to dance, not to whistle, not to sing, to admire nothing too loudly on the way, to stop no-

where. He must hold his father's big hand and not depart from his parents.

The selfish, tyrannical parents are afraid the passers-by in the street, who all belong to the silent conspiracy against the child, might say, he is "badly brought up"; they fear to lose their reputation as "civilized" people—the cowards! Therefore, they steal the child's originality, his freedom, his happiness!

What wonder, then, that the child, on finding out that his parents are not his friends, not his comrades, but his superiors, enjoys much more to take his recreation without them, so that he may be free to see and do what he likes?

And what wonder that some children run away from their parents?

Some educators speak of inhibition as a necessary element in forming the child. Some go so far as to believe that the child must be taught to do what he dislikes and not to do what he likes, that he must be forced to refuse what he ardently desires and to take what he hates mostly. In other words, they claim that to render the child unhappy and to suppress his will is the right thing in upbringing and education.

I am convinced that many a talent has been crushed by this inhuman, unnatural theory and that it has transformed many a plain, honest child into a cunning liar and later into a cheat, an impostor, a hypocrite, a criminal of one sort or another. Undoubtedly, the large dose of inhibition and renunciation contained in the prevailing religious systems has been

baneful and pernicious beyond measure and is, among other causes, responsible for the slowness in the progress of humanity in the last two thousand years.

Inhibition does not need to be imposed. It is identical with self-discipline and self-control. It is a result of our living together in social groups, of our adaptation to other individuals. Under natural conditions it is beneficial; as an artificial method it is a calamity.

Another fundamental error in the relations between parents or, generally, adults and children is the lack of truth. You do not need to be extraordinarily clever to see this. If you are an objective observer and a lover of truth, it will be easy for you to find that rarely will an adult tell children the truth and that often he will lie to them. Just watch him and you will soon satisfy yourself that he lies to his own or to somebody else's children. And notice the contrast between the enormous mass of lies which surround the child and the assumption of the older people that *he* must be truthful. This hypocrisy of the grown-ups, who, notwithstanding the inextricable net of lies in which they live and make the youngsters live, require of him that he never tell a lie, is revolting.

All around is the lie, the conventional and unconventional lie, the eternal foe of humanity. Adult men and women are lying to their best friends, to their wives and husbands, to their lovers, to themselves, in their higher and lower schools, in their personal, commercial, political, social and diplomatic relations,—internationally, nationally and individually, in momentous transactions as well as in trifles, in substance as

well as in form! They lie through words, deeds, gestures, books, yea, even by their manner of dressing. Their clothes always hide something or make believe something. The women's rouge and powder lie as much as their smiles. They create lies in the shape of religious systems, they distort history and bend science to suit their interests or theories, they prostitute art to the god of lies,—art, the most sublime thing they have, the essence of the best there is in man! The press, which has evidently been created to give us the truth, is proverbially alien to it. One who knew his fellow men thoroughly, said: "Language has been given to man to hide the truth." Another student of men said: "If it is printed, it is a lie." And after all this, we have the audacity to punish the child for telling a lie, or, more correctly, to punish him for having been caught at it!

The father, who has told the whole day innumerable untruths in his office, to employes, partners and customers, who has written letters with untrue contents and has signed his name a hundred times under the mendacious "yours truly", comes home in the evening and demands the strictest truthfulness from the child!

Our language is diffused with lies. The usual adjective is so little believed, that we instinctively strengthen it with "very", "awfully", "terribly", "wonderfully", "certainly", "really", etc., and often back these words with others. And even the latter must frequently be corroborated with still other terms or we must take God as a witness, and, after all that,

most of the time both the speakers and the listeners know that they are lying and tolerating a lie.

The child cannot help being a liar. He is made so by everybody whom he meets, by everything he sees and hears—everything made by man. From his birth, the adults form an impenetrable wall between the child and the truth; they all conspire tacitly to withhold it from him and to wrest it from him when he finds it.

It is ridiculous to hear the ignorant repeat one after another, and all after the upholders of the Church, that the child is born with all possible vices and therefore he is also a born or a habitual liar when, as a rule, the contrary is true. The child's mind is simple, naive, direct, full of a healthy and legitimate curiosity and of thirst for more and more knowledge and truth, but through our education it is bathed in lies, it is violated in the vilest manner. Rarely can it resist a long time to the hot fire of mendacity in which the childish intelligence is being forced from the first minute of its existence among the adults who, generally, have learned long ago to hate the truth.

Besides, the child who is apparently being punished for an untruth is often actually not allowed to express the truth, which expression means to many people effrontery or lack of politeness—and so he is pushed by plain brutal force to adopt the lie as one of the most necessary of his weapons. Fear of the great authority of the adults teaches the child to employ ruse. He soon learns that he must not give his opinion candidly, that it is dangerous to disagree with his super-

iors, that he is expected to obey them without any discussion, and when he cannot do so he finds a subterfuge that will save him from punishment.

But the parents do not use only physical persuasive means to subdue the child's wonderful independence, to curtail his freedom and to arrest his natural search for truth; often they are "educated" and "polite" and know how to twist his mind by means of sweet words: "It is not nice to say that, dear." "You must not ask such questions, dear." "I would not go there, dear." And here a push, there a pull, further a significant frown with the eyebrows; that is frequently another way of accomplishing their brain-stifling work.

And remember how many times a day you hear such sentences: "This is not a doctor, it is an uncle." "You want the book? I have lost it." (Has hidden it.) "If you don't behave, I'll call a policeman and have you arrested." "If you talk too much, you'll become sick." "If you don't eat my soup, you'll die."

Seldom are adults ashamed of a child or do they fear lest he might soon discover that what he had been told was not true. Seldom do adults consider it of any consequence to lie to the child at any time. The people whom he meets in the house, the good uncle, the old grandfather, the smiling aunt, the big brothers and sisters, the parents' acquaintances, and, of course, the parents themselves, lie to him at every step. The same thing with grown-up people whom he meets elsewhere.

But I must say that *I do not know of one instance*

in the work of bringing up children, where a lie is necessary and I am convinced that what is true for us, is equally true for our children.

A strong objection to the present methods of bringing up children is the lack of respect for the child.

To avoid a misunderstanding, the distinction between love and respect should be drawn.

Who can deny that most mothers love their children? But does this protect the child against the mother's tyranny? Not more than the same love would shield the baby from the errors made by its mother in the physical care which she bestows upon it. How often is her ignorance, combined with her prejudices in health matters, the real cause of the child's sickness—sometimes death! To be sure, in such cases she is very unhappy, but her tears cannot resuscitate the little waif whom she has killed just as if she had intended it. Many times her love for her offspring is directly responsible for her mistreating them. In the same manner, through love, and through love alone, without the inhibition coming from reason and intelligence, parents may crush or assassinate the most precious thing their child possesses—his own soul. Love, as such, is no guarantee against conscious or unconscious cruelty.

Love may be, and often is, destructive.

While trying to lead the beloved person into what is regarded as the right path, while being over-zealous to help, and even because of such zeal, one may commit the greatest blunders, the greatest sins against the welfare of that most cherished person. Indeed, no

sentiment is more selfish, and therefore more blind, than love. All love—including parental love—is egotism. Of course, we must love and be loved, we need to take and to give. But we should be on our guard against ourselves, for our love benefits our fellow men only if it is mixed or mitigated with other sentiments favorable to the object of our affection, and mainly if we appreciate other people's right to freedom.

Just to love does not imply or necessitate intelligence. The usual love is instinctive. A cat may love her kittens just as warmly as any human mother.

Parents generally love their progeny, but *do not respect them*, do not view them from the child's standpoint, do not consider their moral or physical persons as important as those of adults. They demand respect from the young. They say: "The child must be taught to respect us." The child's opinion is ignored as irrelevant or ridiculous.

He must not take part in the conversation of adults. He must not stand too close to a guest. The parents are mostly indifferent to his wishes.

All adults, even those who are entirely unrelated to a particular child, and no matter how inferior they are mentally to him, take the right to patronize him, to caress him, to mock him, to look at him from above, to admonish him and often to punish him.

All this contributes largely to make of the child, in the course of time, a characterless being, who grows up to be more or less what his elders have been, and to bring up, in his turn, his children in the same way. Is it astonishing, therefore, that we meet so few real

men, real individuals, with some originality or with a respect for other people's originality; so few who distinguish themselves in one way or another from their contemporaries?

The few who do stand out from the crowd in a useful sense to society are far apart, and have had a hard struggle to exist or to express themselves.

Of course, the whole frame of human society, together with its economic system and all the principles derived from it, and the persistence of some sort of slavery during all our historic epochs and in all "civilized" lands, have been largely responsible for this state of affairs. But, while this may be another story of the egg and the hen, it is very probable that, in the last analysis, conservatism, which is to be found in all organized society, the inclination to perpetuate the order of things as they are, not to disturb the relations between men, social conservatism which is such an important factor in our long, changeless periods, and is expressed in the life of the individual man in his intolerance of new methods and ideas,—is itself an effect of the conservatism of each member of society, a sum total of the laziness and fear of change inherent in every one of us, or acquired by us.

In our complicated relations it is not rare that the effect becomes the cause of a phenomenon which is itself the cause of the same effect and the result strengthens the first cause.

We have put into the words "father" and "mother" much more of the idea of veneration and fear than of love. The child is seldom the equal of his parents;

he rarely has the same rights as they; seldom is he their friend, and seldom does he regard them as friends. They rarely deserve it. Parents and children are not always acquainted, let alone intimate. The child has no faith in his parents; one cannot trust superior people, masters, persons who have some of the attributes of "divinity," who are "faultless," who are above one and whom one must respect unconditionally and without expecting any respect in return.

Real friendship between child and parents is possible only where mutual respect prevails. The child should be considered as somebody, as he is, indeed, somebody, quite as much as the adults among whom he lives.

I remember, when I was a small child and did not fully understand the conversation of grown-up people, I always thought their words must be very important and weighty and extremely wise. But when I grew up a little and listened to them as they talked among themselves, I was terribly disappointed to hear them say indifferent and trivial things and enjoy worse stupidities than I was used to hear among my little companions, and jokes which were not worth a smile; to hear them laugh without any plausible reason, and speak about entirely unimportant matters and in the most foolish way.

Adults, considering themselves superior, judge the child from the height of their wisdom. When they say "bad boy", "good boy", "bad girl", "good girl", which, among those who deal much with children, occurs, as a rule, some hundreds of times daily, there is

nobody to remind them that they too are often "bad boys" and "bad girls".

In the orders we give the children, in the blind and unquestioning obedience we demand from them, there lies not only our despotism, our cruel desire to dominate and to annihilate the liberty of those who are weaker than we; there is also a lack of respect for the powerless. Parents do not advise the child; they command him to do this or that. Think of the orders most of the parents give their children without condescending to state the ground for or the object of those orders or to explain them!

SECOND PART

Some Practical Advice

Start Early

There is no end to education. The work of bringing up the child—that is, of thinking at each step what and how to do, and what and how not to do, should begin at birth. The most important part of the work is in the hands of the parents; the child himself, becoming a man or a woman, will continue it until death; but how he will continue it will depend on how it was begun. The foundation is laid in the earliest childhood. Do not wait, as some will counsel you, until intelligence is fully awake, which means until the age of two. The infant needs mainly physical care; but his budding mind also wants your attention, although your help there should rather be of a negative than of a positive nature. "Hands off!" should mostly be the rule. Baby should be left alone, and I know, to leave your child alone, especially if you have received the usual and prevailing education, is the most difficult thing in the world. But make an effort; it will be worth while.

A normal baby should be manipulated as little as possible. He must be fed and cleaned; he must sleep. He must not be disturbed or excited unnecessarily.

As a rule, all adults in the house and all visitors play with the baby. They carry him, shake him, lift him, tickle him. Often, while he is lying comfortably, quietly and happily in his crib or busy kicking in the air vigorously with his feet, or while he is contemplating the windows and is learning to distinguish between light and shade, some one seizes him in the wrong way and starts to whirl him brutally around the room. A little later some other person attacks him suddenly in another fashion. Everybody excites his nervous system. Usually the majority of the adult people of the family, and from among the relatives, having their spare time in the evening, annoy the little one at the time when he needs relaxation and mental rest.

Why does an adult like so much to play with babies? Is it not for his own pleasure? Is it not through sheer selfishness?

It will depend a good deal on the parents' behavior whether the baby will acquire harmful habits or not. As there is no distinct limit between physical and moral education, some of the sins committed against the child's body will be reflected on the condition of his mind, and vice versa. Nursing or feeding regularly, as the case may be, plenty of sleep and cleanliness, will not only keep the child healthy, but will have a favorable effect on his tranquillity and happiness as well. A normal child, living normally, is not cranky and is easy to handle.

Right from the beginning learn to accord the child cheerfully all that you could and should grant him, and to refuse him sternly and energetically all his

impossible and unreasonable requests. Later, when you can do so, explain him why he cannot get certain things. Be kind to him, study him and try to understand him, but do not spoil and pamper him.

All experienced parents know that a baby a few weeks old finds out quickly that by crying he can force his mother to submit to his will or to his caprice; that is, of course, if a wrong start has been made. By the improper conduct of his parents he is very easily taught to be stubborn.

Therefore, do not postpone for a later age your plans for the child's bringing-up. Begin as soon as he is born, or even previous to that. Be prepared; be sure that your general principles are right, and as to details, it will not be difficult to take care of them if you are frank and true and if you always think as much of the child's freedom and happiness as of his physical welfare. If you start early, the task will be easy later.

In order to be ready for the great responsibility, we must unlearn and forget more than we must learn and remember. To be rational is simplicity itself. But few parents have had a rational education and they have lived for 20 or 30 or more years in an irrational, topsy-turvy society. They have witnessed the most illogical things and events, they have been accustomed to conventionalities and taught to be shocked at unconventional and unusual actions. The distorted, untrue, insincere point of view, the current morality, being the atmosphere in which they always breathe, has pervaded their blood and marrow, penetrated their mind

and has been absorbed by their whole being. None of us can, even with the best preparation, with the rarest power to relinquish old prejudices, liberate himself totally from the mountain of centuries-old, of thousands-of-years-old ideas and methods. They are too heavy; humanity has dragged them for too long a time to make it possible for any one to discard them at once. But *unlearn we must;* throw away we must as much as we can. We should make at least a step in that direction; it is our duty to the baby, who, besides his inherited characteristics, which we cannot change, is a blank sheet of paper and has an innocent body and mind, soft, like wax, entirely at our disposal and waiting for the imprints we will make. Our responsibility is great, not only toward this young, fresh, palpitating life that has just come out from his mother's body, but also toward the immediate descendants of this baby who will be under his—that is, partly under our—influence, and toward the countless generations that will eventually originate from him.

But some people, thinking of the responsibility involved in the bringing-up of a child, imagine it as something so terribly difficult that they shrink altogether from it. We should face the work, but should not exaggerate it. Some of those who have learned how to swim will recall how the fear of drowning made it hard for them to learn. Their movements were awkward, their muscles cramped and contracted, and their thoughts all intent upon the importance of the whole performance. They could not swim until they gained confidence in themselves and until they took their work

somewhat less seriously. We should not fall into any of the two extremes. By all means, let us put all our seriousness and all our attention into the new task, but let us do it with a light soul, with a promise to watch ourselves at every occasion, yes, but with faith in ourselves and in the child, who, if treated honestly, will be of great help to us.

And let us not say, as some pessimists and sceptics contend, that there is no hope for us to bring up our children in a different way than most of the surrounding people do; that we are not allowed by the written and unwritten laws to act independently. It is true that we cannot go as far as we would like in this respect. But, after all, there are regions in our lives where no power can enter; there are corners in which nobody but ourselves are the masters. All laws and conventions remain outside our roof, be it ever so humble.

Within our four walls we can reach a great measure of freedom, if we would only dare, if our inner self were free.

Nobody can force us to talk to our child in this or that accepted way, to smile to him or to frown on him according to this or that theory, superstition or belief. And every one of our words and deeds count; every one of them will be placed somewhere in the brain of the being so dependent on us. While society is a tyrant, it can interfere but partially with our giving liberty to our child, with our making of him a person who thinks by himself and whose actions resemble his thoughts.

The reason why we should begin with the baby and lay our hopes in childhood is that the infant and the child are free and open to the truth and to new ideas. Of course, we may also hope to re-educate the adult, and sometimes this is accomplished, but never entirely, never radically. At any rate it is very difficult, as all those who have tried to reform themselves and those who have ever attempted to make any sort of propaganda to others will bear me out. An adult may change his political and economic standpoint, he may as it were paint himself red on the surface; but his heart, his deeper convictions, his rooted habits are rarely altered. He is fundamentally the same as he was at the end of his first childhood, at the time when the formation of his character was ended. The mind of the grown-up is more or less crystallized. Some shrewd catholic teachers were right to say: "Give me the child before he is six, I shall return him to you after six." Although my opinion is that the most impressionable age, the age in which the greater part of the character is molded, is between two and nine, I agree with them in principle. They knew that until six they were able to sink into the depths of the child's soul such heavy stones that no human wisdom could remove.

Yes, start early and start right.

The Child's Dwelling Place

Everybody nowadays hears and reads much about the importance of fresh air for the health of the body, and very few people will have the courage to admit that they spend most of their time indoors, although this is a fact for the majority of civilized men in the cities and for many in the country. But the great outdoors is not only salutary for the welfare and the proper functioning of the organs; it is just as necessary for the development of the mind, for the understanding of the relations between ourselves and the world, for the broadening of our thoughts. Room-bred children, no matter how much they have learned in schools and books, are ignorant, have a narrow horizon, are more inclined to homocentrism and egocentrism than others. They suffer not only from blood anaemia, but also from moral anaemia, as it were. Children of all ages will profit from being kept much outside; even small babies will be less cranky, because more amused and more interested in their surroundings, out in the open than between four walls. Let the child be where he is happiest. We owe it to him.

Rooms and houses are indispensable, but if we stay in them a too-long part of the day they are harmful from every standpoint. The rooms of the rich or of the middle class, generally filled with furniture and pictures of bad taste, and where the child is often under guardianship of slavish and doggish or utterly corrupt servants, who, subconsciously enraged at their lower social position, sabotage on the master's children, contain a vicious and poisoned atmosphere. The rooms of the poor, overcrowded, dirty and ugly, are a hell for the child, who lives there in contact with all sorts of adults—parents, reatives and boarders. The congested street, sometimes far from any park, is not the ideal, but it is preferable to the room. The society of other children out of doors, although not always beneficial, usually towers high above that of the average adults, be they parents or governesses. Of course, if a choice between the latter two sorts of educators were permitted, the worst parents are often better than the ordinary governesses.

As even under the best circumstances there are many moments, many days, when children are forced to stay in the house, they should have their own room, their own working and playing room. Naturally, this is almost never possible in workingmen's families; but the somewhat better situated workers or the small bourgeoisie, who could afford such a necessary luxury, also neglect it mostly, the child being considered as a supplement to the adult population of the home, and any room, the kitchen or bedroom, is good enough for him. Wherever feasible, the children should not

be denied their own room, where they should be at ease to do as they please. Where this cannot be had, the adults should be lenient to the child, who must play in all rooms and cannot help "spoiling" things; he has to be to some extent what you call "mischievous"; it is not his fault. If you cannot give him a room for himself, at least do not confine him to the kitchen or to a dark, unhealthy, cheerless sleeping room. (In fact nobody should use such a room.) Open your "parlor" to the child; do not keep it locked and all prepared for guests who rarely come. The children's room should be bright, sunny, airy, simple, not ornated, with no fixed chairs and tables, so that the children could decorate it or change its inner form according to their needs and desires. The least suggestions the adults would make in this respect the more advantageous it is to the child. The adults should be onlookers and should watch with the utmost restraint, coming to the rescue in case of imminent grave dangers only.

Playing and Fighting

Do not forget that the child takes very seriously whatever he does; that which seems to you, who cannot recall the details of your own childhood, futile or ridiculous, is really vital to him. What you call play is for him *work*, or at least *acting*. His imagination is rich and flexible. Therefore, do not be astonished when, for instance, a chair becomes an engine. Do not accuse him of lying on that account. The chair is an engine for him in all earnestness. Acting is for the child often equivalent to dreaming, as his dreams have not yet been submerged and drowned under the veil of his subconscious mind.

The child prefers a real object to a specially made toy that imitates an object or a person. Give him such things which you can spare; many times some discarded material will make a better present and will be more appreciated than an expensive toy. An old clock, some real tools, will make him happy. The reason is that he is not playing, but working—doing things.

The very young children, who still have the habit

of putting everything into their mouths, should not get anything that could be harmful. But they are easy to manage in this respect, because they rarely have preferences.

Mothers should never forget that food, pieces of bread, fruit, etc., are not playthings and that by nibbling at them and by half chewing them and swallowing particles of them, a baby is liable to spoil his digestion.

Avoid to give the child a whistle, as its use is apt to become promiscuous and so spread disease. If it does happen that an older child has in his possession a whistle, explain him the danger of lending it to others, indifferently whether they belong or not to the family. By the way, this could lead to a very interesting and instructive conversation.

Do not be angry if the child breaks his playthings; you should expect this. He has to find out how things are made, how it sounds when they are torn or smashed, what power he must use to destroy them—and even the fact that under certain conditions things do break. Curiosity is the mother of science. The child is a student, a worker and is always experimenting. What is an old story to you is new or unknown to him. We are accustomed to our ignorance, but he is not. And then remember: how many times did you not destroy your playthings before you gained your present experience?

Do not force the child to use the old toy with which he is disgusted. We frequently see mothers carrying their child's doll or fathers pulling his loco-

motive, because the child, being tired of these playthings, had thrown them away. Sometimes it seems as if the parents really need the toy for themselves, or that, if they try repeatedly to impose it upon the child, it is not for the latter's happiness, but out of economic considerations, because the thing cost money, etc.

Do not put your own theories into the toys you give the child. To present him with a flag (any flag), or to bring him soldiers, swords and guns, is wrong. It is particularly unjust to teach him intentionally that killing is at any time a sacred action and that it is connected with bravery and heroism. Who can tell what share in the perpetuation of war is due to this education which glorifies the taking of other people's lives under this or that form and in which war toys of one kind or another have always played a prominent part?

If you live in the country, there will be no problem of playthings—that is, in a rational system of education. There the child is never idle. There is not a tree, not a branch, not a leaf, not a pebble, not a blade of grass, not a puddle of water, that may not be of service to the child. Yes, the sky and the sun belong to the party. Mud is a good architectural material. Climbing a tree is a great adventure. The life of the birds and insects, observed directly, the intercourse with nature, are more vluable books than all the libraries in the world.

Do not expect the child to remain clean after some hours of playing; not more than you would expect a mason to be clean after a day's toil. And, just as

a carpenter does not wear an evening suit or his "Sunday best" during his work, your child should not be dressed so that his getting dirty would be a sacrilege. To keep him in clothes that would allow him no free movements is a crime. He is not a doll, and it is indifferent to him whether his stupid mother is ashamed that her more stupid neighbor may mistake the child's working habits for an inclination to be unclean.

As to the perils lurking in all experiments and adventures, including the child's play work, they are not to be minimized. But, ultimately, there is a greater danger in eliminating all possibility of injury, and the child must pay the price without which he could learn nothing. He must get hurt. It is the parents' office to prevent all really serious mishaps, which are, on the whole, rare. The only way for the child to find out how to avoid accidents is to be confronted with them.

Healthy children are boisterous, not just to annoy the adults, but because they have to be so; they cannot help making noise. Loud yelling, uprarious laughter, wanton nonsense (or seeming nonsense), pranks and frolics are their life. Previous to applying any punishment or to admonish them, stop a while and think. They are children; they are not so old as you; they simply cannot be grave and sedate; they must be jolly. And consider how much you gain by their gaiety, how much this elevates your own spirits under normal conditions. If you are at all sensible, you will readily enter into their scheme, and their exuberant

fun will communicate itself to you and capture you, body and soul.

What would childhood amount to if it were quiet? How would its youth, overflowing with vitality, look, if it were always serious? A noiseless child is either a sick child or a subdued child,—in any case, an abnormal child.

Never teach the children games unless they ask you to do it or you are yourself a real, whole-hearted partner. Let them invent games; let them play "irregularly," as you call it; let them teach each other what they know; let them be as original as possible. If you see them improvise a game that seems to you strange or absurd, or has no meaning for you, do not lose patience, do not intervene. It will not conform to your ideas as to how they should play. But the principal thing is that they be happy. Your rules are not good for the child. If he follows them, he does not feel as if he were playing at all. They are rules of old heads with old opinions and old tastes.

Do not use out the child's games for so-called practical purposes. Do not try to teach him arithmetics or latin by means of his amusements, recreations and diversions, although arithmetics may be played instead of being "studied"!

No adult should mix in children's fights among themselves, unless the danger for life and limb is too great. It is easier for them to adjust their quarrels or to fight them out, it is easier for them to make peace and arrive at an agreement without the adult's assistance. As a rule our presence complicates the

situation. It is a well-known fact that often, while the parents, after having made "fools of themselves," are still deadly furious against the opposing child and his parents, both originally contending parties have forgotten their feud and are again playing in the most friendly terms. Children are not as vindictive as grown-up folk.

The Child's Conflicts

In his conflicts with the world, let the child as far as it is feasible, bear his own responsibilities and solve his own problems. He will soon find out that his liberty is curtailed by social conditions; it will be up to you to explain to him, when he asks you, why he cannot have something belonging to other people, why he cannot step on the grass in the city park, why he cannot take a picture from the museum, etc. But do not fail to tell him the truth and the whole truth in all questions. No matter what falsehoods you are compelled to utter daily for a living, leave your unclean cloak outside and approach your child with a pure mind. Become an innocent child in his presence. If he doubts your words, do not force him to submit to your views; let him transgress and see for himself what will happen.

If the child cries in the street or in the street car, and if you know it is not your fault, if you have failed to persuade him that he is unfair, do not interfere. Do not be ashamed before the public. If the public has something to say to him, let them say it.

In general, it is not good to be intimidated by the child's crying. If you are convinced that he is wrong and just spiteful, ignore a few times his tears and shuffling with his feet and he will come to terms, and—what is more—he will not repeat the same scene in the future. Pity as such is not always helpful. Of course, such occurrences are rare or impossible with a child rationally brought up from the beginning.

When adults have altercations with children, most of the time, though not always, the latter are right and many a parent sees this after regaining his calmness. If you find you were unjust, have the courage to admit it to the child and ask his pardon. This will have a wholesome effect on him and will teach him not to be stubborn and to acknowledge his own errors.

If the child's behavior at table is insufferable, do not send him away. You will conquer him rather by leaving the table yourself under protest, and eating elsewhere. If he has been properly brought up, he will resent this more than anything else and will soon yield. Of course, in such cases be sure that you are right before you act.

Influence

Some people misunderstand the meaning of a rational and free bringing-up of the child in the sense that they fear all external influences upon him. They do not see that it is not more possible or more desirable that the child should avoid being influenced by environment than that we ourselves should not be affected by it. Furthermore, none of us can boast of not being influenced by the child himself. If we are open-minded we will learn a good deal from him and will frequently be swayed by him in this or that direction.

The school, the street, the relatives, the world events will influence the child. What is necessary is to see that the child be as free as possible in order to get that influence in a natural way, so that he should, in spite of it and together with it, and making use of it, remain himself, remain an individual who is able to develop continually, to help change his surroundings and be capable to leave a deep imprint in our world.

While I urge that the child's individuality should never be neglected, I would not want my readers to fall into the other extreme—to separate the child from the rest of the world. He is naturally interested in society, in work, in other children and grown-ups. Do not exclude him from all that; do not isolate him. Let him feel that all he possesses comes to him from the world and from human society, from the efforts, from the joys and sufferings of past and present society; that his foundations are rooted in society, that he has been born into a world that was ready before him, and that he, together with the others, has to continue it.

Let the child become a strong social individual. If, on the other hand, *you* wish to influence the child, the best way is not to preach him, but to live up to your ideas. If you want him to be honest, be honest yourself. Keep your own promise if you want him to be trustworthy. If you want him to be orderly and clean, keep your home clean and in good order. The child will talk much if his parents are loquacious, will easily become furious if they are inclined to become angry, will not be generous if they are avaricious.

The child sees and hears and imitates—we are all imitators—what occurs around him. He is a keen and alert observer, his mind is ever open, and he always seeks to comprehend and to correlate what he sees.

The Parents' Assistance

We all have a tendency to help other people and to correct what we regard as their mistakes, especially if we disagree with the methods employed by them. But there is an unwritten law which requires that we "mind our own business" and we usually refrain from meddling with other people's affairs. This law, this restraint, holds good, however, among adults only, probably because of the unpleasant results that are liable to follow in case of its transgression. Such fear being eliminated in our relations with the child, adults allow themselves to lend him their help, to force him to accept their assistance, to help him so much as to often deprive him of initiative. They watch him work and play, and believing him to be slow or incompetent, or disliking his way of doing things as being too uncommon or too original, they become impatient and interfere with his activity. They forget that he cannot be as clever as they are and that ability can be acquired by practice only. They are also blind to the fact that originality, no matter how queer it

seems to a person used to routine procedure and to the beaten path, is always a quality and never a defect.

Except in the case of extreme compulsion or urgency, *we should assist the child only when we are requested by him to do so.*

If your child asks you a question and if you are able to answer, give him your reply in a simple, natural manner. Tell him the truth; tell him what you think. Do not try to adapt your reply to this or that pet theory of yours. If you do not know the answer, say so, and, if possible, try to find it out.

To avoid a misunderstanding I wish to add that I would not leave a child in a real great danger without coming to his aid. But such situations are exceptional. I have spoken above of those daily occurrences which are familiar to all of us and during which the adults constantly interfere with the child's will to learn independently.

I have met many men and women who, because in their childhood they had not been permitted to do anything without aid, were utterly incapacitated to help themselves whenever any situation out of the ordinary arose in their lives. Others, through the same wrong bringing-up during childhood, have been so crippled morally and mentally, as to be unable to attend to any of the everyday indispensable duties. They are entirely dependent on their parents, wives, husbands or servants. And the fact that most of the people are incapable to think independently, that they want somebody else to think for them and to manufac-

ture their opinions, is also largely due to this education of chewing the mental food for the child.

The more you help a child, the more helpless he will be.

It is true that the child may sometimes gain much by our experience; but our experience should not be imposed upon him. He should rather absorb it by observation, by seeing us at work. He must make mistakes and try out his own forces in order to obtain his own experience. He must have his own adventures, his own failures, make his own discoveries and inventions; he must find out by himself as much as possible. This is the only way in which one really learns and assimilates anything. The parents should be armed with the utmost patience.

When we think of ourselves as experts in comparison with the child, we should never lose sight of the teachings of history which show us that human progress is not due to the work of the experts of any given epoch, but to the achievements of the so-called inexperienced but daring individuals who, through their audacious experiments and in their attempt to test out their theories, have opened for us new roads and have brought us new lights. Continents have been explored, territories have been discovered, astronomical laws have been found, scientific principles have been practiced, social systems have been revolutionized, not with the assistance, support, co-operation and encouragement of the experts of the time, but in spite of their opinions, nay, against their open, and often violent, hostility. And do we not see today that one

of the strongest obstacles in the way of a new social system is the warning of the "experts" in economic matters that the modern, socialist's, single-taxer's, or anarchist's dreams are impossible—the opposition of the "experts"?

Let us avoid to put ourselves, to put our experience, between the child and his desire to achieve novel combinations.

At last, let us avoid to teach the child to become too prudent through our assistance. Too much of our oldish foresight may hinder the child to accomplish anything important.

Clothes and Dressing

The child should be allowed and encouraged to dress himself unaided as early in life as possible. This is one more step to teach him independence, will-power and self-reliance. Whenever there is no hurry, do not mind the slowness with which he will do it. When it is to his own interest to accelerate the work, as, for instance, when he desires to go out immediately, show him what he loses by lingering too long. The details of shoe lacing, buttoning, etc., are best learned by personal practice. Do not lose your temper when the child makes mistakes. Again, what seems easy to you may be difficult for him, although in many other respects the reverse may be true. If at all possible, turn your back and do not look to the child when he is dressing himself.

While I do not advise anyone to be too cranky about clothes and would not recommend anybody to judge a person by his outer neatness, I would condemn real slovenness, as symptomatic for other defects. If you wish that the child be careful in his dressing habits, you must not neglect your appearance

yourself. Do not be a bad model, as, no matter how original your child will be, he will—or may—copy many of your traits. Though cheap and poor garments are generally ugly and cannot always be kept clean, there may be a certain touch to them that betrays a desire for order and beauty. This the child should constantly have before his eyes.

Let the child's clothes be as simple as possible, no matter how wealthy his parents are. Discard the superfluous clothes. This will be more agreeable to the child and will make dressing and undressing easier for him.

Boys' and Girls' Work

Little girls are more prompt in learning how to dress themselves than boys. But I am not certain that this is due—or at least altogether due—to an inborn inclination to housework. It seems rather to be a consequence of the belief that the girl has been chosen "by nature" to attend to what is called female occupations and therefore she is *trained* for that purpose from the very beginning.

Plenty of instances could be given where an education contrary to the prevailing ideas has proved the opinion concerning the feminine innate skill at domestic duties to be unfounded.

I am far from preaching that boys should be feminized or girls should become boyish. Rather do I believe in the conservation of all the useful and fine mental qualities that go with the differences between the sexes. But unfortunately the children are mostly being made one-sided and artificially specialized in accordance with the parents' and society's theories, and so are losing many opportunities to make use of

all their latent qualities and to gain all the dexterity and efficiency of which they would be capable.

The girls ought to be less girlish; their acquired or inherited adroitness for delicate performances ought to be completed by exercises that would give them strength and daring, a condition they would certainly reach if freely brought up, as I know from actual experience.

Boys should not be brought up to think that a man must never wash dishes and girls so as to believe that a girl must not drive a nail into the wall.

It is not improbable that our continual reiteration and insistence that certain works and duties are too masculine for girls and women has contributed much to retard the emancipation of women. That many or all of our claims as to such incompatibilities are false has been demonstrated again and again by the fact that women have lately entered a multitude of fields hitherto considered unwomanly. And do not men make the best cooks and tailors and are not most dish-washers in restaurants recruited among men?

The boys should not be boyish only; they should not lack grace; their rougher and coarser characteristics should be supplemented by those capacities of which they are so much in need.

And let the girls not acquire that intolerable habit, usually imparted to them by their mothers, to *mother* too much the male sex, first their brothers and later their husbands, which is often the cause of grave marital quarrels.

The Heroic Age

I do not think, as some people claim, that there is a particular "heroic age" for boys, that is, some years during which they are inclined to be more romantic and to undertake more difficult tasks than at other times. Boys and girls, if left alone, are *always* heroes and heroines; childhood is the heroic age of our life. Until experience has taught the child that many of his visions are impossible of attainment he clings to them. But as he learns to check his fancy against the facts of crude reality and to correct and inhibit his imagination, he gradually grows more and more sober and drops most of his dreams one by one. Of course, to a certain extent this is unavoidable, but much depends on how adults meet the products of the child's phantasy. They often misunderstand him and unfortunately succeed in shortening this happy period through ridicule or by cruel force, in which case they have irreparably destroyed a most valuable part of his soul life and inner felicity.

Indeed, who knows how many dry, prosaic, matter-of-fact, inartistic temperaments among people of all

walks of life are the result of this forcible stifling and suppression of the child's illusions. Something of their deep appeal should remain with us until the grave;—as it does with many, but, alas, not with all, with some more, with others less, according to the education we have had and to the circumstances through which we have passed.

Whenever you are inclined to "correct" the child, stop and think whether your standpoint is really the correct one and what the effect of your words may be. When it is compatible with other phases of his life, let him enjoy his romances, and, to the best of your ability, share them with him. It will do you good, too. Do not take from him what you cannot replace or give him, his sun, the inspiration coming from his inner light. Let him empty the whole cup of his childishness; he will carry enough of the hard and heavy burdens later. Surrounding conditions will awaken him in time.

And always have before your mind the fact that the child is an apprentice; while he is brought up, he is learning the trade, as it were, of being a parent to his own future children. Your way of bringing him up may be a mirror for him, or perhaps a net from whose meshes he may be unable to disentangle himself in his mature days.

Coercion

Do not use force with the children, not only because of the barbarity and physical pain involved in it, but also because of its disastrous effects on their mind and character. To bend them, to achieve their submission, means to weaken their manhood and womanhood, to help enslave them in the future. Force may inspire fear, may breed hatred, but will never convince any one. How often do I meet middle-aged men and women who confess that they still detest their parents because of the cruelty of the latter in the past, and that the usual conventions only compel them to feign an apparent "friendship" for the old folks!

In the autobiographies of great writers we find that in all cases in which their mothers had been mild and good to them in the writers' childhood, the latter describe them with much affection and gratitude.

Why should your memory not be loved and cherished by your children?

Even caresses should not be bestowed upon children by force. Do not kiss or embrace them if they show the slightest sign of disapproval. To disregard

their will or pleasure in this respect amounts to an actual abuse.

You may say that all these are but minor details; but the whole life of the child—and of the adult too, for that matter—is composed of such little details only, as very few are the people who ever have great adventures.

But some modern and cultivated people, those who have heard something of freedom in education, have endeavored to find a way out of the difficulty. They know how to force the children hypocritically and gently, gracefully and with the sweetest voice. The result for the child is the same or worse as if brutal force were used. The children become meek, submissive, compliant and characterless.

In a free bringing-up of the child, all dishonest means should be discarded. Coercion is coercion, no matter in what suave manner it is practiced.

Do not insist on turning the child's attention to things in which he is not interested. Do not teach him what he does not care to know or that to which he is not inclined.

It is undoubtedly a mistake to compel a child to study music against his will. Those foolishly ambitious parents who would make of their children musical celebrities should understand that just because one or two famous musicians had their talent brought out by constant whipping during childhood, it does not follow that all children will succeed in learning even the elements of music if these are poured down their throats by compulsion. The fact that so many hun-

dreds of thousands of children are tied daily to the piano or violin without any appreciable result except a selfish satisfaction for the unintelligent and tasteless parents, ought to be a strong argument for letting the children alone.

And do not insist that the child sing or recite before your guests. He is not your plaything. He will perform if he so chooses, but if he cares not for your friends, who, mind you, are not necessarily his friends, or if he is not in a mood to please you or them, do not urge him to submit.

All normal children have talents; some are marvelously genial and remain so in the future, if we do not muzzle them and if social conditions do not blight or destroy their gifts. Sometimes the latter, even if promoted, disappear by themselves; they die a natural death. But in all cases it is our duty to encourage and stimulate them by generous praise, and not, as many do, to dishearten them by disdain and mockery. I am speaking of the very young children, of course. Let them dance; they will do it with more grace and individuality than the teacher to whom you may send them. Let them make up poems; do not correct them. Let them draw pictures; do not criticize and instruct them; do not laugh at the too long nose and the too short arms in their sketches; do not jeer and rail at the unreal animals and trees in their drawings. There is a meaning in them, there is an inclination to translate imagination into reality.

Do not compel your child to wear long hair just because you, in your vanity, are reluctant to part with

his head ornament, or because you find it becoming. The child is not your doll. Let him be as comfortable as possible for his constant work.

Never force the child to confine himself to the use of the right hand only. While the original cause of our preference to use the right hand for our work is still under discussion, there is no doubt that ambidexterity, that is the use of both hands, whenever this is possible, is of great advantage and should be countenanced and promoted.

By all means, let the child read and see beautiful things, but do not *compel* him to do so. If he objects, wait; his time will come. Try again later. Or perhaps his temperament is different from what you expected.

It is undoubtedly a mistake to force the child to ask forgiveness for anything he has done or said. It is humiliating and has the effect of injuring his pride and of softening his personality more than it is necessary. You may be able to persuade him, to make him see that he has committed an injustice, if such is the case. This is sufficient. If you are in the habit of acknowledging your own errors and particularly your sins toward him and to make apology for them, he may do so too. But if he does not do it of his own accord, do not insist.

Punishments

Punishments as such are never needed in our relations with the child. A punishment is an act of revenge against those who incur our wrath for doing something we do not like. A punishment never has the effect to correct or improve. Usually it has the contrary effect, leaving, besides, a more or less pronounced feeling of rancor or hatred against the physically stronger person who orders or executes the punishment. It engenders lying. And if the child does change his conduct, apparently as a result of the chastisement, he does so in reality only when he is under watch or observation. If somebody is "good" only for fear of being punished, he is truly not "good" at all.

Excepting some restraints in extreme cases, which are very rarely necessary with children whose bringing-up has been rational from the beginning, there is no danger for the child to be left free in his words and actions. In a correct education there can be no place for punishment of any sort: the child will find his penalty in the pain or displeasure which will follow his deeds, exactly as is the case with adults.

If a child will do me some harm, of course I will tell him my opinion or I may act as I would if an adult should offend me in the same way; this will depend on the circumstances. I may express my discontent by not talking to the child for some time or by being less friendly to him than ordinarily. I would do that not with the intention to impose a penalty and not in a calculated or premeditated manner, but because I would really feel like acting that way, and only if I so feel. And if my relations with the child are generally cordial, the contrast would be striking and would make the child think.

Punishment may range from the coarsest bodily aggression to the finest and most polite words with which one may steadily annoy the victim.

That physical tortures, which are comparatively little employed against adults in the more modern prisons, still prevail in the homes and are frequently used against children, is incontestable. Not to speak of the many fiendish and refined inventions by which all kinds of pains are inflicted upon children, not to speak of the occasional violent rage of many otherwise normal parents who in such moments go to terrible extremes, regular and typical instruments with which children are castigated still exist. Some time ago—oh, bitter irony!—I saw the cat-o'nine tails hanging in a New York store near the children's toys! . . .

Yes, corporal punishment still reigns supreme everywhere, alas! even among progressive parents. No matter under what conditions it is being applied, it is nevertheless but a cowardly and barbarous act

which proves nothing else than the adult's muscular superiority and the dependence of the child. Flogging, whipping, boxing the ears survives in the schools, too, in the schools of all civilized countries, including our own, although it is legally and on paper prohibited. "Bad marks" in school and the importance in which they are held by the parents, have often been the cause of illness and death or much suffering, but rarely of real improvement in children. The punishment symbolized by the rod shows the parents' or teachers' moral weakness, as it emphasizes their lack of other arguments, not to mention the fact that the child usually does not fail to adopt the same methods as his elders, and that he remains with these methods for life.

Even those punishments which amount only to menacing the child or to terrorizing him morally, are dangerous. If you think that something should not be done, why not explain that it should not be done because it is harmful? Why tell the child "Don't do it, the policeman will take you!" or "The man will come out!" or "God will punish you!" The other day I heard a father say to his child in the train: "If you don't sit still, the Bolshevik will get you!" And how ridiculous and foolish it is for mothers to threaten the child with the father's punishment! "I'll tell your daddy!" is a confession of inferiority on the mother's part and an incitement for the child to hate his father.

Some parents threaten the child so constantly, that many good and necessary things are regarded by him as punishments. How should his mind not be confused

if his parents tell him "If you don't keep quiet, I'll make you an enema!" or "If you are naughty, I'll call the doctor!" and use other similar stupid threats? When he really needs the doctor or when an enema must be made, the child is terribly frightened in advance.

Fortunately for the children, rarely can a father or a mother afford to pay as much attention to them, that is, to dominate them as much, as he or she would desire. This saves them from being entirely and utterly crushed.

Sometimes the rage of punishing the child for everything that seems sinful to the parents results in a true catastrophe for the child's future. For instance, he is often punished for carving the edge of the table and for destroying other pieces of furniture with his pen-knife, and so perhaps a talent for sculpture is being nipped in the bud, instead that his so-called bad inclinations be led into the right channel, instead that wood and tools be given him to be used and spoiled to his heart's desire.

Rewards

One of the most unfortunate methods in the relations between parents and children is to give the youngsters a reward for obedience, for submission for "being good", for doing "good" things,, for doing their duty. Where this continues for some time the child becomes a little tyrant and does nothing without a recompense, which, in such case, amounts to a bribe. He exacts a tribute that must be paid if the vicious circle brought about by his parents' stupidity is not broken somewhere.

This situation often begins at a very tender age when something is offered the baby to stop his crying, and continues all through childhood and adolescence. Toys are given not because the child is in need of them, but in order to repay him for his good behavior or to appease and propitiate him. A penknife is presented to him because he has had good marks in school. Cakes and sweets are not food, but remunerations for services rendered. A penny is an argument to make the child keep still.

Under such conditions all reasoning is lost. The child knows his parents' weakness and learns that by

lying, flattering or threatening he can obtain anything he desires and that his elders are an inexhaustible source of exploitation, of income, for him.

Recompenses are akin to punishments: both have the same demoralizing effects.

Children should be so raised as to do their duties without either expecting a reward or fearing a chastisement.

Money should be given them when needed, and not as a salary for services rendered to the house.

Of course, praise for work well done should never be spared; it should be granted whenever there is an opportunity, which in the case of normal children occurs quite frequently. It should be sincere and true.

If you are able, give your child pretty and instructive books, let him see good paintings and sculpture, take him to the theatre, to good music and beautiful dancing, whenever such performances, suitable for the young, are going on in your city or neighborhood; by all means do so. But do not give this pleasure in such a way that it is considered a special favor bestowed upon the child, or a compensation in exchange for some work performed, or as the payment of a bill, as it were. Amusements of one sort or another are just as necessary as food. You owe to the child those mental pleasures that are in accordance with your purse, whether he "behaves" or not.

By the way, do not give him amusements which he obviously cannot enjoy. For instance, do not take a child of seven to "Aida" or to some difficult concert, as some parents do.

Fairy Tales

In the last years some educators have been protesting against the telling of fairy tales to the child. They claimed that this old fashion was detrimental to the child's intellectual progress and that it filled him with superstitions. I disagree with this opinion. To my mind, a pretty fairy tale, well written or beautifully told is, in a sense, just as true as any of the best literary novels catering to the adults; in fact, an adult with taste for art and with some imagination will derive from it quite as much joy as a child. There is some truth and some teaching in every good fairy tale; although even if there is nothing but mental pleasure in it, it is worth while. Besides, a child brought up rationally will be made happy by a fairy tale, but will not lose his power to discern between real truth and fable and his ability to compare and criticize the story will remain intact.

Just as it is a mistake to keep the child too naive, it is a bad policy to make him lose his childishness and become too grave and serious. He may be interested in scientific facts or ponder over political and social

problems, as I have known children to do, and at the same time preserve that admirable care-free and jolly behavior so characteristic for his age. He may in all earnestness want to understand natural phenomena difficult to explain and simultaneously jump on one foot, climb a tree or play you a trick,—or listen with deep interest to a fairy tale.

I cannot say the same thing about weird and uncanny ghost stories and other ugly and frightful narrations, which are calculated to pour poison in the form of fear into the child's soul and so render his nervous system unbalanced. They often have disastrous effects immediately or in after-years.

Obedience

Obedience means "submission to command, prohibition, law or duty". To obey means "to do the bidding" of a master, "to comply" with an order, "to be controlled" by a power. By definition, then, "to obey" indicates a loss of one's will, of one's personal rights, a handing over of one's liberty to decide to another person who is therefore empowered to enjoin, to dominate, to rule.

One of the consequences of obedience, even when not strictly enforced, even when "hearing" is not "obeying", is the destruction or diminution of personality. It is claimed that the obedient individual, while losing his independence, is gaining in comfort because of his lack of responsibility. But this is untrue, as even those people who are mostly and by force of habit since long deprived of much of their conscious volition, do feel at times a more or less dull or muffled revolt against their condition, a revolt which may, under certain circumstances, blaze forth into an open rebellion. Does it not happen that soldiers who are old in service and whose real self has been squeezed

out by many years of discipline, sometimes show signs of chafing under the chains and finally mutiny? Such occurrences are explicable by the fact that while the habit of blind submission and obedience may kill a large part of the will power and self respect of a large number of people, it never kills it altogether and in all those concerned. Personality may be paralyzed, maimed or outwardly crushed by fear, but it reserves itself a corner in the victim's soul, where it stays concealed and from where it sometimes springs out or where it remains until the individual's death annihilates it. From its hidden place it may utter subdued or dumb, ineffective and impotent menaces. It may cause abject and hypocritical crawling before the mighty master. Practically its existence may be considered as nil; but latently it exists and indifferently whether consciously or unconsciously, it waits for an opportune moment to burst forth in the form of accumulated wrath, and not only to get justice, but revenge as well.

Lying in all its forms, from the coarse, gross, evident lie, to the mental reservation and the fine untrue noddings of the head or the false smiles or the skillfully woven half truths,—base, flattery, low servitude, —these are the results of obedience.

It is certainly just as mean, if not more so, on the part of the oppressor to be obeyed, that is to control by fear, as it is for the oppressed to obey, to act through fear. No matter how deeply this condition has penetrated into their lives, in the last analysis it is a misfortune for both.

And how undesirable it is that anybody should shirk responsibility and have someone else bear it for him! Nothing gives as much strength to a man or woman, nothing makes them more capable to accomplish something and to work for mankind's progress, as the necessity of being responsible for their actions. This is true for all members of society, for all classes, for all ages, including the period of childhood. The consciousness of one's responsibility brings a natural self-discipline, which is in all respects infinitely more worthy and precious than any enforced discipline.

But according to the prevailing methods of bringing up children the parents' ideal is the child's complete obedience, his meek submission, his perfect surrender! A vile and sordid vice, the mother of endless other vices is being sung as the highest virtue of which the child is capable! A calamity which has done and is doing unspeakable harm to everyone of us separately and to all of us collectively and which, among other things, has been the cause and the means of all wars and of humanity's backwardness, gladdens the heart of so many misguided parents and teachers! A child is "good" if he obeys; he is "bad" if he disobeys,—this is the test by which he is usually judged.

The child must obey without discussion; he must believe that his parents are always right, that they never fail, and, therefore, their commands are sacred. Are there many parents who realize what a misfortune it is for the child to get into the habit of obeying

without knowing why, and the result of such an obedience for the child's intelligence?

Not only is the child's happiness marred, not only is his initiative impaired and his character broken as a result of an education of involuntary obedience, but through it, seeds are planted in him that will make of him a conservative in the worst sense of this word, one of the enemies of any and all changes.

It is a great fortune for the child that he does not always obey, that he preserves enough wilfulness not to be altogether submerged or destroyed. It is good that boys and girls are sufficiently "bad" not to be entirely suppressed in a moral sense by their parents and other adults. How sad our world would look if the children's seniors had their way and if their ideal of the child's obedience were realized!

The little progress humanity has achieved is undoubtedly due to that innate and marvelous and, yes, indestructible inclination to be free, to be as much one-self as it is possible within the boundaries of society. The little advancement that we see has been made *in spite* of the thousands of smaller and larger obstacles placed on our way by individual and group authorities, by systematic repression, whether with good or bad intentions,—through the order to obey.

Can the parents not see that, no matetr what they have done for their child, he is not their property and owes them nothing? And what they have done for him has been partly or wholly compensated and in many cases over-compensated by that which their own parents have done for them. But, after all, this

is irrelevant: the child has not asked them for the—often questionable—favor to be brought into the world, and under no circumstances have they a right to claim to have been more than nature's tools. The care and the time bestowed upon the child are things which you cannot help giving him; it is your necessity as well as his. Frequently the parents have good reasons to be grateful to the child—or for that matter, to nature—for the privilege to love him, to scold him, to bring him up. How unhappy is usually a sterile couple!

Of course, the child owes his parents friendship and affection, but only if they deserve it, and they will gain it easily if they are the child's true and devoted friends and if they do not exact from him that horrible and accursed tribute, obedience!

Although the child's individuality cannot be entirely effaced, the methods of blind obedience often reduce him to a phantom, to a shadow. What is the child in his tender age, and what does he become after he has learned to obey? The child begins life as an original thinker, as an original searcher and his activity is a mirror of his thoughts. Compare him with himself when he is three, when he is five, when he is ten; compare him with the man of twenty! How little is mostly left of his originality! How much he has lost on his way to adolescence and maturity!

Good Manners

The so-called good manners belong to those abstract things which vary so much with lands and epochs. They usually go hand in hand with social conditions, which they help to perpetuate, although some of them have been carried along from prehistoric or immemorial times, and do not conform any longer to our present forms of life.

Our conservatism clings with all its might to old methods and styles, but the majority of them, if not all, will have to yield to the great fundamental modifications which are bound to come in the near future and which will sweep many of our customs to the scrap-heap with more energy and with greater success than it has ever occurred before. Nor will most of us weep for their loss, as there are but few people who subject themselves voluntarily to them or who feel comfortable with them. For so many of them are nothing but hypocritical and mendacious formalities whose actual object is to wrap bitter realities in sugared coats, to conceal bad will, enmity, hatred and ugliness by a nice—not always beautiful—external

appearance, to deceive us or to make believe that it is deceiving us into taking a lie for the truth. Our good manners hide bad falsehoods.

Of course, our manners are adapted to our economic life, which is based on theft and deception, and often they are an outgrowth from it. As soon as the necessity for lying will disappear, the lie in our social relations with one another will disappear.

How long will it take the average child to detect that usually a smile is not a smile, that a handshake is not a handshake, that a bow is not a bow and that polite words are—merely words! How long will it take him to learn that even when people emphasize their assertions with such words as "truly", "really", "honestly", "upon my honor", they are generally telling an untruth, or just then the untruth is more flagrant and needs more re-enforcement! The ordinary child is not an idiot and therefore he quickly learns to understand the game and, if he does not guess the underlying putrid and immoral relations, he vaguely suspects that there is something to hide and that he is expected to say one thing when he means another thing.

Teaching good manners has no sense. Real politeness cannot be taught and does not need to be taught; it comes naturally as a necessity in our social intercourse and will be transformed with the social evolution, if we have no interest to eternize society as it is with all its qualities and defects. Let the next generation have its own manners; let us not hinder it.

Why should your child be forced to shake hands

—and it must needs be the right hand, the child, not aware of the ancient superstitious origin of this habit, hears to his stupefaction!—for the sake of politeness only, with people whom he dislikes? Why should he not find out for himself the necessity of being polite, of shaking hands, if such a necessity exists? Why should he repeat unwillingly and parrot-like such phrases as "good morning" and "thanks", the meaning of which he cannot grasp—and which, by the way, we ourselves often repeat mechanically without really feeling the need to pronounce them? It is easy to see that in everyone of these details there is a violation of the child's personality and a necessity *for the parents* to show to their fellow-hypocrites their submission to the rules.

I would go as far as teaching the child to call his parents by their names and not "father" and "mother", so that the signs of their supreme and harmful authority should disappear.

No, a child brought up rationally will not be impolite. He will be polite *in another way* than the usual one. If you cannot change your own forms of politeness, continue to live according to them, and let the child choose whichever form he may desire, and imitate it; but do not *teach* him your "good manners", do not impose them upon him. Do not interfere with him if he attempts to adapt to his own temperament the manners learned from you, if he simplifies or amplifies them, or if he adds something to them.

Religious Ideas

Although nothing is so widely spread as those superstitions which are usually known under the name of religious ideas, I am not convinced that they are a natural necessity for human beings. All my readings, which include both sides, or rather all sides, of the religious and anti-religious controversy, all my observations among people of various beliefs and in more than one country, lead me to the conviction that the common religions are kept alive artificially by the very weight of their antiquity, by the fact of their being so universal and successful, by the fact that they always manage to help the governing bodies and by people who are materially interested in the preservation of this or that church.

All the religious systems have been a factor of progress at some time and in some place; that was when and where they, in conjunction with new economic and social aspirations, were minority theories in opposition to the dominating powers. But their misfortune was that as soon as they became victorious, they entrenched themselves and did all they could to perpetuate themselves, which meant that they became

conservative and reactionary forces, no matter how much they kept on adjusting and adapting their outward forms to the continually changing conditions. At present all the old creeds with all their organizations constitute a tremendous factor for reaction and an unspeakable danger against the development of moral ideas, of life and liberty.

Of course, there are extremes in all religions, in the methods of practicing them as well as in the pure abstract idea of religion as such. But it is a mistake to attempt to whitewash religion from the slavery that it has always countenanced and from all the crimes that have ever been associated with it, to try to detach religion from the interests of the church and synagogue and to view it as independent from clericalism and class morality. All the efforts of some writers and thinkers who are discontented with religion as it is, but are not bold enough to throw it overboard altogether, all their endeavors to find at least a refuge in the suggestion that true religion is nothing but that morality which is dwelling in every one of us and which dictates us to act for the benefit of our fellow beings, and other similar contentions, are entirely futile and doomed to utter failure.

It is also impossible to rehabilitate the figures of Jesus and Moses as fighters for the down-trodden proletariat, now, after they have been so long put to the service of plutocratic interests; and the few highly moral principles found in the New or Old Testament have been too much compromised by the many wild, barbarous and immoral rules and examples found in these books, and altogether drowned by the flood of

deceitful commentaries in favor of robbery and slavery.

Our moral ideas have nothing to do with religion and with idolatrous practices. We can be moral without gods and priests, and we can be immoral with them. In fact, we are more immoral with and through them. No matter how good our intentions are, we should wipe out the word religion from all our truly moral teachings, as it has been too soiled internally and externally and cannot be cleaned at this late hour. If one needs the support of a god, he should not associate him with morality.

Of course, any well-informed and really thinking individual will find any god a too limited theory. He will see that the heavens are much more beautiful than they appear in the imagination of the petty pious minds, that everything around us is much greater and more wonderful than their superannuated beliefs describe it. He will see that that which was thought in the past to be a narrow little world created and reigned over by an autocratic, despotic and tyrannical god who looks like a man, has been wiped out by science, which has opened before us an infinite world, so grand that it cannot be made or created by anyone, and which is more magnificent and sublime than the highest god invented by men.

In the light of all experiences and of all these thoughts I must declare that I have not the slightest doubt that any child who is not coaxed or forced in one way or another, or who has not been taught religion, will never enter any religion by his own free will. The untutored child is naturally a-religious, or non-religious, which is an argument against and not for teaching

him religion. That he would never go to church or to a synagogue for praying, that he would never touch any of the boresome prayer-books, and that he would never take part in any of the operations of devotion *if he were not obliged to do so*—and this in spite of his religious education—is something that everyone knows. If this were not so, how can we explain why a child born of Christian parents goes to church—and always to the church of the same denomination as his parents—and a child born of Jewish parents goes to the synagogue? How, if not by the fact that he is taken there by his parents? Why does it not happen that some Jewish children suddenly begin, by their own free will, to follow the Christian religion and that Christian children start by themselves to be synagogue patrons?

Children who have been taught religion or who have heard about the divinity are almost always skeptical and embarrass their parents with questions which the latter prefer not to answer.

Such sensible queries as "Who made god?" are asked by very young children only; the latter are usually so severely rebuked or punished for them, that they do not repeat them when they become older. Their lips become sealed and their minds clogged.

A rational bringing-up of the child should make *tabula rasa* of all superstitious beliefs of any kind, regardless of what their pompous names are and no matter how venerable they are.

But this does not mean that religion, as affecting and afflicting the greatest part of humanity, should be ignored. On the contrary, it should be made known to the child in the most impartial, unpartisan and

unbiased way, just as we learn about the religion of the ancient Egyptians, Assyrians, Greeks and Romans or of the present inhabitants of Central Africa or of some island in the Pacific Ocean. It must be known because it exists. It is a phenomenon that has figured and figures in the life of men. To deny or to conceal its existence as some freethinkers do is equally as foolish as to force it into the child as a part of his soul. Dogmatic radicals are not less unjust than dogmatic conservatives. The child may choose his ideas or may create new ones only if we afford him an opportunity to do so, and we never do it if we hand him down pre-conceived opinions of any sort.

There are those radicals who go so far as to be afraid even of the casual contact between their children and religious persons or religious influences. Nothing is more erroneous if the child is mentally normal and has been brought up rationally. As long as he has preserved his right to ask, "Why?" "What for?" "How?" and as long as he is not denied the right to say, "I do not want," he is fire-proof; he will not take anything for granted without being shown evidences and reasons. Of course, it is important that the influence brought to bear upon the child should not be too one-sided, as this would be unfair to him.

If, after all we have done to keep the child free from prejudice, he happens to become a victim of religious beliefs, which would be a very rare occurrence, we shall know that this will not have been due to any fault of ours; but even then we should let him pursue freely his way according to his convictions or sentiments.

Making the Child Immoral

One of the objections to the rational bringing-up of children is that it would make them "immoral". We all know how difficult it is to differentiate between what is moral and what is immoral, as the notion of morality is so changeable. But if we take one or two important items which are usually measures of morality almost everywhere among civilized men, we will readily perceive which form of education and bringing-up is really closer to the most moral principles. Let us consider the respect for other people's *life* and *property*, the opposite to which would be the lack of such respect in the professional thief, burglar and murderer.

The prevailing education teaches the child theoretically that stealing and doing physical harm is immoral and incompatible with a decent and sociable living; it inspires a veritable horror against the taking of another man's life and of something which belongs or is supposed to belong to him. The child, in his simple and direct logic and straightforward judgment, would always take his superiors by their word, would literally believe what they tell him and would act accordingly,—which would be a catastrophe from the point of view of present property interests and so-called patriotic interests,—were it not for the practical coun-

ter-teachings which he gets and which totally nullify the former teachings. Indeed, sometimes a recalcitrant child clings to the letter of the fundamental theory and tries to apply it at once to all situations in life. Then, of course, he meets with great hostility from all quarters, he is continually reprimanded, ridiculed and often severely punished, until he discovers the colossal contradiction between the theory and its application, and, quite disillusioned, but subdued and tamed, he ceases his antagonism to the existing order of things and lines up with the others, as one of the numerous and great herd of children and adults who accept everything with no protests or with the faintest of protests only. The result is our present human society with all its basic and collateral injustices and the immense difficulty of the comparatively few fighters for the truth to make the people see the actual condition of affairs.

Together with the precepts pretending to persuade the child of the sacredness of life and private property, and as an *antidote* to them, other instructions are given him simultaneously, counteracting the possible effect of the former. Murder, if done by the state under a jury's decision and as a revenge for other murder, is called execution and is permissible and legal. Killing, if organized and done with the best tools and by an army after a war declaration by one or many representatives of the people, becomes an act of heroism, —not to speak of the shooting of animals, which, in the form of hunting, is considered a fine sport and is being encouraged. Robbery on a large scale, if legal

or to be excused by legal means, is held as an honorable occupation and given to the child as a model for emulation. Destroying life through industrial conditions and through poverty is not even excused. He is taught to esteem and admire the rich, he learns to grow sentimental at the details of their lives and deeds. Even in the so-called "democratic" republics he is taught directly and indirectly to kneel mentally before monarchs and their families and before all sorts of aristocrats, whose titles have their origin in robbery and usurpation and whose only merit it is to have been their parents' offspring. The common history books used in schools always tacitly or affirmatively approve all the famous plunders as indiscussable facts, and all the great assassins, as models to be imitated. Some of the most audacious land grabbings which are the foundation of many respected large fortunes are never mentioned by educators. The child is always discouraged from asking questions concerning the beginnings of land property.

In opposition to this, rational rearing of children would allow free course to the child's questions and objections and would let his logical thinking and reasoning go to their extreme, indifferently what the consequences may be. Perhaps the child would then discover how deeply immoral and corrupt society is, perhaps he would find out the true meaning of commerce, of capital, of war, of charity, of riches, of inheritance. Perhaps he would ask himself or he would ask us, why the land, which certainly has not been made by anybody, is owned by some people and not

by others. Perhaps he would be guided by this logic and once on the right track, come to see in his mature years the fine and concealed thread uniting in principle the pickpocket, the house burglar, the shop lifter, the safe blower, the train robber, the highwayman or the sea pirate on the one hand—with the store keeper, the shop or factory owner, the mine operator, the landlord, the land speculator, the stock gambler, the share holder and dividend getter in capitalist enterprises on the other hand, or with any one who lives without really working for a living or who has any share in the exploitation of others, indifferently how much the law upholds him or how respectable he considers himself or he is deemed by his fellow citizens, or how charitable or liberal minded he is. This comparison, which may shock many a good soul, is difficult or impossible to be seen by most people because of the mountain of untrue precepts under which it has been buried during childhood, but would soon be discovered by a free, untrammeled and unsophisticated mind. Perhaps the child, while getting acquainted with our intricate social system would slowly see the full immorality of our society in which none is really and entirely certain not to be somebody else's total or partial parasite and in which even the exploited do not escape from exploiting others, at least temporarily, no matter how indirectly or unconsciously this is done, as, for instance, by depositing an insignificant amount of money in a bank. Perhaps the mystery of this complicated but profoundly unsound society would unfold itself to him and he would see how deeply it is immersed in theft and in all that

ensues from it. Indeed, the great care taken that the child should ignore the naked truth, shows indubitably that he is brought up to be one of the thieves if possible, but at any rate to uphold this system of robbery at all costs. The prevailing education in all its phases is one that is calculated to keep the interests of the band alive; it is just the education needed for an alliance of brigands,—of hypocritical, not frank, brigands.

Nor will it be necessary or advisable to urge the child to inquire into such matters. All that is needful is that a true answer be given to his candid questions and that no lie, no matter how subtle or refined, be added to the truth in order to cover it up.

If one sincerely compares both these systems of education, one will readily see which of them leads to more morality, to more respect for life and real property, meaning by this the respect for property acquired or to be acquired by labor, by manual skill, by talent.

It is true, rational education might be conducive to subversive behavior; it might, within one or two generations, overthrow the present order of things, or rather evolve a new order,—but is it immoral to do that?

On the other hand, do not believe that the child will always jump to the most extreme conclusion and that, if allowed to know or do one thing, he will surely do that which you consider its inevitable sequel. Do not judge him by yourself, do not lend him your own intentions, do not assume that his intentions must be

or must easily become bad or what you call bad. As a rule, if a full and satisfactory answer is afforded him, he stops then and there, like somebody whose hunger has been satiated, and a long time will pass before he will resume his inquiries in the same field.

There should be no fear lest a rational rearing of the child will make of him what is commonly called a criminal. As far as the form of the child's bringing-up has to do with his future conduct, the customary irrational education and the surrounding social influences should rather be made responsible for criminality, sharing this honor, of course, with the arch-cause of all our present troubles and problems, the economic conditions. The continual insistence as to the desirability of getting rich by other people's labor, the contempt in which the workers are held by all, they themselves not excepted, the eternal laudatory remarks and allusions thrown everywhere and by everybody concerning those fortunate persons who succeed in getting something for nothing and concerning those who live easily, the general and wide-spread tendency to make man-killers loom high in the child's phantasy, —all this adds some venom to the already large dose of poisoning that floods and distorts his mind and to the social circumstances to whose demoralization few people can resist. Aye, it is surprising that there are no more avowed and illegal criminals than there are; but the explanation for this is to be looked for in the *fear* of the people to commit crimes, not in their conviction that crime is immoral.

Moreover, we, a society in which the amount of

illegal crime is a trifle compared to the tremendous amount of legally sanctioned theft and murder, so long as we continue to wade in this muddy morass, have certainly lost the right to show indignation at anything really criminal, unless we consider, as we frequently do, all acts advocating justice as crimes.

Let us avoid stamping the child with our brand of justice and morality; let us make an honest effort in that direction. Let the child find new principles, new forms and, if he is able and if it is possible, let him transform even fundamentally our ideals of what is right and wrong. If necessary, let the child teach us; let the new generation be in reality a *new* generation and inherit from us what is absolutely indispensable and not more.

Stand aside, let the child pass! Do not be in his way!

The Higher Morality

True morality is the power to put ourselves in the place of others, to understand them so thoroughly, as to suffer when they are unhappy and to be joyful when they are happy. Of course, primarily this may be based on selfishness, but altruism is just another form of egotism, which is, to my opinion, an excellent arrangement. Egotism, intelligently understood, is the only safeguard of the individual in society and of society against the individual.

Morality evolves naturally from the extremely selfish sentiment of justice to oneself to the necessity of seeing justice done to others,—to members of one's own family, to fellows of the same tribe, of the same social class, of the same nation, of the same race. If developed to its extreme point, it embraces the animal world as well.

To-day we have side by side people whose morality has been arrested at various stages of evolution. There are those who think nothing of the life of a person whose skin is dark, but who are tender-hearted to the lowest white man and woman. There are people whose

ears are deaf to injustices against the workers, but who will weep at the sight of an injured cat. Some will respect human life fanatically and will not kill even in self defense, but will sit down with a clear conscience and eat a pound of meat carved out from an animal that was alive the previous day and that is anatomically and physiologically similar to us and mentally closer or at the same distance or perhaps just a trifle farther than the lowest human being is from the greatest genius. Some will resent an offense against their nation to such an extent as to go voluntarily to war, but at the same time will treat with the utmost cruelty citizens of their own nation who happen to belong to a powerless social class.

Rational bringing-up of the child would permit his free moral development. To be sure, he would pass rapidly through a moral ontogeny, as it were, would reproduce the various phases briefly in a more or less clear form within the first years of his life, and would finally, being yet in childhood, land on one of the highest points. Even under the worst educational methods the child usually reaches a lofty sense of justice; but the parents, the school and the morality prevailing in his surroundings in which all help to bring him up, "correct" it and sometimes overcorrect it, that is tear down more and more of it, until, when he is of mature age, only a small portion of it is left.

How often does a child reach the extreme of superior morality and would not permit the slaughtering of his pet animal for food! He may even go so far as to refuse to partake of animal food altogether. In such

cases he is ridiculed or punished until he is calloused to the cruelties of his elders.

Nowadays morality goes together with fear. Ours is a scare-crow morality. To be moral and just without being forced to be so, without being afraid of some punishment, be it from a divinity or from the law, is an anomaly and frequently a subject for concealed or open derision. The conclusion is, of course, that the reverse, the lack of fear, will result in immorality.

One of the characteristics of the higher morality is not to need the element of fear. The higher morality is something inherent, something without which the truly moral individual cannot live. Let fear from all sources disappear from our educational methods and what morality will remain will be true, untainted, clean,—and doubtless it will be higher than it is at present.

Superstition and Intolerance

Our life, our mind is steeped in all sorts of superstitions, besides our religious beliefs. Some of them have been carried by humanity since its earliest youth, while others have been formed in more recent periods of our history. Our own times are generating them continually.

Superstition is the science of the non-scientific and non-critical mind, of the mind which requires no proof, no experiment in order to believe, of the mind which believes easily and never knows.

Superstition never bothers about facts; it is a theory without facts, although sometimes, as in the case of our modern, quasi-scientific superstitions, it claims to be based on facts, which, however, on closer analysis, prove not to be facts at all, but beliefs.

There can be no exact limits between true knowledge and superstition, because we cannot have an entirely impersonal science and because many things established as undoubted facts at one time turn out to be incorrect in the future. Yet, the more we learn to think scientifically, the more we discern between

true and false science,—the more we free ourselves from superstitious beliefs.

Such beliefs being among the greatest impediments to research and knowledge, it is of the utmost importance that the child should be taught accurate habits in clear thinking, should be encouraged to search the truth as much as possible and should always learn to ask for facts and to give facts. His future power of analysis and criticism will largely depend on us. Not only is his whole spiritual life and inner freedom and his capacity of learning intimately connected with his ability to examine and to reject *a-priori* conclusions, no matter by what authority they are approved, but frequently we jeopardize the welfare of his body by our implanting our own pet superstitions in him. We must guard as much against the belief in the infallibility of great statesmen or of the best known remedy, as against the necessity to step out with the right foot or the fear of number thirteen.

It is good to bring in a dose of skepticism even in the study of the purest science, or at any rate, never to enter into the belief of anything so deeply as not to be able to abandon it.

It is useful to learn to employ without shame the simple but not humiliating words: "I do not know."

Superstition goes hand in hand with prejudice, and their product is intolerance, which is one of the greatest handicaps in the forward march of humanity. I do not know which is the least tolerant nation in the world, but surely this country has the sad distinction

of being among the first ones in this respect,—a painful impression which any foreigner gets soon after his landing and which he continues to have for many years. I have no doubt that one of the reasons for this condition is the wrong way of bringing-up American children in school as well as in their homes.

The type of people who have arrogated to themselves the right to be called Americans, composed of comparatively few descendants of those European colonists who settled here up to a hundred years ago, but mainly of those born here of immigrated grandparents or parents, armed with the rights and privileges of prior occupancy, reluctant to be mixed up with the newly arrived, despise the recent immigrant whom, although he is contributing to the development of the country more than he is profiting from it, they regard as a beggar. They have constituted themselves as a sort of nobility and demand that all conform to their standards, which have invaded the school and the home and which threaten to wipe out all originality. Grayness and similarity are the paramount virtues; all departures from the accepted forms in general behavior, in dressing, talking, eating and thinking are frowned upon, looked upon with contempt, ridiculed or treated outright with violence. A man with a beard is mocked at, and in certain circles, roughly handled; a woman with a hat whose shape resembles a male headgear, in the best case is followed by children, and in the worst case by men using unpleasant remarks; a man wearing a straw hat before the proper date is regarded as a great curiosity and

often stoned by rowdies; somebody who openly breaks the unwritten marriage rules is exposed to ostracism, and sometimes to physical punishment or even to "tarring and feathering"—not to speak of the intolerance of new ideas and of the mistreatment of Negroes. Those who have an interest to keep social and economic conditions unchanged make use of the people's intolerance in order to destroy their opponents.

The more the possibility of expression of all those who possess a deep and unusual individuality is being restrained, the more social life is becoming dull and uninteresting. All American cities have been built on the same pattern and, with few exceptions, are exasperatingly alike and characterless, just like those who inhabit them. The same may be said about the press, the theatre, the public festivities and so on. When I came to the United States, an old inhabitant told me that "with one key one can open all the doors in this country." I found subsequently that he was perfectly right not only in a figurative sense, but almost literally. I would add to his words that all the minds may also be opened with the same key, which may be partly true for any place on the globe, but which is more true for this than for any other civilized nation.

I am sorry to say that this wicked tendency, this nefarious work to scare away originality, has been frightfully successful and one of its unfortunate consequences has been to create *an atmosphere entirely inimical to the development of the fine arts*, which, as we all know, need a medium of tolerance, of freedom, of real life.

In education as well as everywhere else, the request for tolerance must be all-sided. It must go so far as to allow the existence of ideas and forms which are not desirable even to radically inclined people, to radically inclined parents.

The child absorbs like a sponge everything he sees and hears. It is easy to poison and rot his mind with intolerant sentiments. Therefore, in this respect as in many others, we have to be constantly on our guard; any of our gestures, any of our words may be responsible for a long arrest or retardation of social, economic, artistic, yea, scientific progress. Let us begin by cleaning ourselves from old, worm-eaten beliefs and habits and let us counteract actively the wrong teachings of the child's surroundings.

The Child's "Vices"

I do not believe in the old theory, that we are innately bad, brutal and anti-social; nor do I share the opinion that we are born with the best and sweetest dispositions. It is a mistake to exaggerate either our defects or our qualities. The child's propensities, as well as the adult's, depend principally upon his environment, upon his opportunities, upon his conditions. We are all products, even though we in turn become the agents of other products.

I am thoroughly convinced, however, that the child is, as a whole, in every respect better than the adult and that he is certainly not worse. He has not had time yet to acquire our defects.

To take but two instances: the child is accused of cruelty and of mendacity.

Any competent and fair observer of children knows that, as a rule, when they are yet very young and maltreat other children or little animals, this is no sign of "badness"; in fact, it is through no fault of theirs. Until after eight or ten years of age they do

not quite realize what death means. Even when they talk about it, even while they threaten their little companions during a fight that they will "kill" them, they do so by imitation, they do not have a distinct perception of the significance of this word. In the first years of their life, although they have suffered pain repeatedly, they do not exactly understand what it means to others. They are unable to associate the cause and the effect to such a degree as to see clearly the consequences of torturing an animal or of beating other children.

It is true that the child, under normal circumstances, until about five or six, rarely later, is a little savage living in the midst of civilized adults,—that is, adults who have learned to restrict or to suppress some of their thoughts, desires and actions. But the savage, the primitive man is usually not more cruel and not less social than the civilized specimen taken as a whole. The child's so-called passion to destroy or to hurt is only different in degree from that of the adult; often it is weaker, at any rate it is never as refined in the child as in the grown-up. Necessity, adaptation to surroundings, resistance of those with whom he associates, teach him how to behave. To this may be added moral suasion, which usually has a very good effect. As soon as somebody explains him in a convincing manner—a few explanations at intervals may be needed—the meaning of cruelty, a normal child will not only desist from harmful actions, but in his imperturbable logic he will not tolerate them in ourselves and will correct us whenever our deeds

do not conform to our words—which happens so very frequently.

But how can we expect the child to be good-hearted at the sight of such miserable examples in his closest proximity? Is it not probable that the majority of normal children would be much kinder than they are if they never witnessed our own open or half-veiled cruelty? Indeed it is extremely rare that a child should not see grown-up folks flog children or fight among themselves. Nothing is as frequent as ugly scenes between father and mother in the presence of the child, between his parents and his older sisters and brothers, between his relatives and his parents, between neighbors. Every day he is a spectator of brutal acts among other children who in turn have learned them from adults. Rude words, repugnant gestures, horrible allusions are so to say continuous and ubiquitous performances.

Indeed, if we compare the child impartially with those who pretend to be his teachers and models, we are stricken by the fact that he is usually superior to them and we are surprised that he is not worse than he is.

Not only is the atmosphere around the child filled with brutality, but he feels its effect on his own body. He is being slapped and whipped at home and in school, by his parents and often enough by his teachers. How, pray, can he, as a finished product, be much better than his surroundings?

Many parents teach the child directly to be revengeful, beginning from the stupid suggestion to "hit

the door'' against which he hurt himself and ending with the swearing of vengeance at the neighbor because her boy behaved insolently.

When it happens that a little tot of three is jealous of his new-born baby-brother and punches him, whose fault is it? Whose, if not the parents', who had habituated him to their immoderate kisses and caresses and who, now, suddenly, have turned all their attention and affection toward the new baby, the intruder, and are neglecting the older child?

We also accuse the child of being a liar. At the beginning of this book I have shown that many adults understand so little of child psychology that whenever he is ''making up'' or ''making believe'' something, they think he is lying. They do not know that he is no more a liar than Mr. Sothern when he plays Hamlet. In previous pages I explained that the lie is one of our institutions, one of the pillars upon which civilized society rests and that the child lives among all sorts of liars. Under such conditions we cannot expect him to be a truth seeker and a lover of truth. Besides, it has already been stated that he is forced to lie in order to defend himself against his parents and superiors. All this makes it plain that the child must become a liar, but it does not prove that he is naturally a liar. On the contrary, I have not the slightest doubt that a normal child, living among truthful people and not being compelled to lie for his own safety, would never tell a lie.

The Only Child

With the prevailing system of bringing up the child, the only child in a family is a big and difficult problem. Usually he is so precious to the parents that they devote themselves entirely to his welfare or to what they regard as his welfare. They pamper him and nurse him and watch him too much. They give him away all of their time. He becomes conceited and priggish and unfit to live with his fellow-children and later with his fellow-men. He is in the company of adults more than it is good for him. He does not encounter sufficiently the misfortunes and struggles met with by other children and so necessary for the formation of the character. His life is too easy.

But all this is not an argument against the control of the number of children; it is an argument for rational education. Under a rational upbringing the above condition does not obtain. The only child comes in conflict with almost all the ordinary difficulties in life; he is not spared the hardships and sufferings due to events and to his own mistakes. His parents do not protect him and shield him more than if he had

a number of brothers and sisters. As far as his parents are concerned, he gets no exceptional concessions, he enjoys no extraordinary benefits. Of course, he lacks the social intercourse of other children *in the family* and the troubles that would arise from his association with them. However, this is inevitable, and wise parents will give him an opportunity to meet children of both sexes and will do all in their power to make him get acquaintances and, if possible, tie friendships with as many playmates as he may desire. He will be permitted to bring them to the house if he so wishes,—a permission, by the way, which all children should have under all circumstances.

Here is the place to add that some children, no matter whether they are alone or many in their family, simply do not like society and after they have chosen one or two friends and until they have made the choice, they do not enjoy the company of other children. When this is the case we have to make sure that the child is physically and mentally normal and that he is not a masturbant or under some depraving influence. If these questions can be answered in the negative, it is our duty to leave the child alone and to avoid imposing the society of other children on him. Among children as among adults the tastes and temperaments and dispositions vary.

What Is Order?

Any of the expressions adopted to designate qualities or defects may be interpreted or understood in one way or the other according to the viewpoint from which we judge. Nothing is certain, nothing is absolute. Just as the words "good" and "bad", "big" and "small", "light" and "dark", "clean" and "dirty" are interchangeable terms, so we may call "disorder" what others call "order" and *vice-versa.*

Some parents are so much imbued with the desire for order, that they change it from a quality into a defect. Such people belong to the category of those unhappy creatures who spend and lose their lives trying unsuccessfully to put things in order and always postpone and never accomplish their real work. They persecute their children and render them uncomfortable by seeking to make them love order.

Now order in time and space is essential for economy in space and time, for effective work, for harmony. In nature a certain kind of order establishes itself without our intervention. Artificial order may be useful or it may defeat its own purpose and result

in disorder. All our rules of conduct and all our laws and their application, if viewed from a higher standpoint, are ridiculous and hopeless tasks; they are foolish even as temporary measures; they usually provoke and breed disorder. They need constant change and adaptation, which is impossible, life being so rich, so intricated that the wisest men cannot foresee the events and situations caused by the relationship between men and men and between men and nature. Necessity is our best teacher of order and of the proper distance between objects, between people, and between things and people. We need no rule to tell us how close we have to stand to the person with whom we converse, etc.

Children are disorderly. But we cannot teach them by force or by means of punishments to be fond of order. All we can do is to show them our example. If we like order, without being cranky about it, they will, in the long run, acquire habits of order. We also can emphasize the consequences of disorder, as often as we have an occasion.

It is easy to prove that if things are not put back into the same place, they cannot be found when they are needed, and that a table on which books and papers and other objects have been thrown about irregularly or littered, leaves insufficient room for work.

The child can only grasp the need of a certain degree of order if he is allowed to work, to make mistakes, to suffer from their consequences and to bear the responsibility. If *you* put his desk in order for

him, you cannot demand that he should keep it as you left it. Besides, your taste may differ from his taste, so that your order may be disorder for him. Moreover, he will never know where his pencil lies, if you and not he place it in the proper corner or drawer.

If you want the child to put his clothes in place, let him have a separate spot for them. Of course, I am aware of the fact that most of the workers' children cannot have such conveniences, but then, in such cases we should not insist in demanding order from them.

However, even if your educational methods are the most rational and even if you succeed to inculcate in children a sense of order, do not expect them to translate it into practice when they are yet very young. With very few exceptions, children, especially boys,—but also girls if their feminine qualities have not been brought too much in evidence by their education—, will not commence to *fully* appreciate the importance of order as adults understand it, until they are past twelve or fourteen years old.

Some parents go too far in the opposite direction. They are delighted to see their child indulging in the greatest disorder and, of course, they never discourage him from it. They have heard that disorder in every day life and bohemianism are somehow associated with art and in this way they hope to make an artist of him. Usually, they succeed only in making him sloppy and slovenly. They do not know that, while some artists have bohemian habits, many of the greatest artists have been very orderly and that others were

disorderly in appearance only, but were very methodical and regular in their work. They do not realize that where it exists, bohemianism is the effect and not the cause of the artistic temperament. Many an incapable man, trying to imitate the artists or to copy the false descriptions of them, went as far as learning to drink and lead a dissolute life and no further.

Work and Responsibility

As soon as his age permits it the child should be invited to take part in some of the work done in the house and for the household. He should bear his share of responsibility in the home, but, of course, his duties should not exceed his mental and physical abilities. As a rule, he will be eager to help, and will be thankful for the opportunity offered him as well as for the importance with which he will be treated.

It is not good to render to the child more services than it is necessary and so to make him lazy and irresponsible. But it is just as bad to abuse his willingness to be useful and to take advantage of his dependency and powerlessness in order to force him to work excessively. As far as possible, too great sacrifices should not be demanded from the child; plenty of time should be allowed him for playing.

It is an injustice to force the older children to give up their amusements and interests and to put them in charge of the younger children and babies,—which is usually a misfortune for both the watchers and the watched. It is wrong to ask any child to do more of the housework than it is his share; or to do that part of the task which is obviously the parents' portion.

That child labor is a curse from every point of view is admitted by all thinking and feeling men and women. It is a shame and disgrace that it has not yet been abolished in most of the civilized countries.

Among the working people and particularly in families with too many children, the exploitation of the children by the parents—and therefore indirectly by the parents' exploiters—cannot be remedied, as long as present economic conditions last. But even in such families it should be avoided as far as possible and the parents should never forget that it is not the child's fault if they did not have enough foresight and if they bred too many successors.

However, this selfish and immoderate employment of the child is general.

In the United States it is a sort of fashion to send young children to work during their vacations, not only in families where the few cents earned by the child are wanted, but even there where no material need whatever exists. This is wrong.

Many parents who can afford to give their child as much free time as he requires, prefer to tender him all sorts of unpleasant jobs, just to hold him in submission.

For some parents and adults the child is a servant and he is treated as such.

I have known a father whose children had to take off his boots and socks and to tickle his sweat-laden and ill-smelling toes until he fell asleep, and I have known an officer in a military jail who required the same service from some of the inmates.

The Kindergarten

I am not a friend of the so-called kindergarten as it is today. But I know the plight of the mother of a large family with much housework or of the mother who must go to work in the shop. She cannot take care of the smaller children, of those of pre-school age, or at least she cannot do so the whole day.

She is compelled to send them to "Kindergarten."

But many women who have plenty of time to devote to the study of the child and to be in his society also wish to get rid of him, as they consider him a nuisance, and they send him to the kindergarten, too.

An ideal kindergarten, which would be a real garden where the children could play and develop freely, one where they would bud and grow like flowers, would be a necessary institution. It would relieve many a poor, over-worked mother for a few hours daily, and what is more, it would often free the child for a while from the grip of many an ignorant, tyrannous mother. It would give the child what he needs so badly, the society of other children, and the super-

vision of intelligent, expert and rational educators. But unfortunately such a kindergarten is rare, if it exists at all. Usually it is a place where the child is kept much indoors and where he is disciplined and his will is bent and broken early, if it is not a religious or semi-religious institution, where nice prayers are taught, where reactionary and wildly patriotic songs are served and where the eye meets only pious and conservative pictures on the walls. As a rule the kindergarten teachers, whose task, if well understood, requires more skill and thought than that of any of the teachers and professors up to the highest degrees of learning, are recruited from among those types of women who are even inferior to the common public school teacher and have even less vision than the latter. Therefore under the circumstances, the child is better off in the average home than in the kindergarten.

The remedy in the case of large families is to be found, as usual, in prevention. . . .

The School and the Home

One of the characteristics of a good school is its close connection and harmonious co-operation with the child's home, or rather the extension of the school's work to the child's home. But good schools are extremely rare; therefore, there is usually a sort of hostility between the common public school and the home.

In many cases the children go to school for no other reason than that its attendance is compulsory. Among uneducated parents this is easily explicable; a large number of them do not see the advantage even of an elementary education. But a good deal of more or less educated parents display but a lukewarm interest in the teachings which their children get in school.

The silent or avowed enmity between the school and the child is reflected in the feelings of the parents toward the school, and with this is mixed the old, not yet forgotten antagonism which slumbers somewhere in the subconscience of the pupils of yesterday.

With very few exceptions, all schools for the young manage to make themselves disagreeable. The school

usually appeals to the child for a short period, until he finds out that it does not come up to his expectations, until he commences to feel in a vague way that school makes him more unhappy than happy. Most of the children who do like their schools for a longer time, do so on account of the society of other children which they get there, but not because of the teachers or the teaching, not because of the school as such. Very few schools are fit for children. Any school to which all normal children do not go with pleasure at all times, to which they do not run with enthusiasm, is bad.

I hope to write a book on "the child and the school," in which I would describe the present school systems and would contrast them with rational school education. But here my intention is just to touch upon the relation between the school and the home, and one of the problems that sometimes present themselves in this respect is the refusal of a bold child to go to school, either temporarily or permanently.

Yes, here and there it does happen that a child has more strength of character than his comrades and obeys his natural inclination to freedom; he rebels against the school. Instead of going to his class room, he goes for a walk, looks into the shops, listens to market women or follows the course of the river. All those of us who were ever guilty of playing truant, know how much more instructive it was than the teacher's unsuccessful efforts. Unfortunately, this never lasts very long, as the "crime" is soon discovered and usually severely punished and an end is put to it

without any deeper inquiry into the causes of the escapade.

The next time this happens to your child just try to gain his confidence, so that you may ascertain his motives and so, with his help, find a way out of the difficulty according to the situation created by his particular case and according to the child's temperament. The details of the settlement of the question cannot be given here, as they are necessarily very variable. One thing is certain, that it would be a grave mistake to punish the child or to bring him to school by force. Usually there is something wrong with the school and not with the child. It is not your problem, but the school's. Be friendlier to the child than ever and protect him, no matter what the consequences.

Undoubtedly, no rationally brought up child will hide his opinion of the school and will make believe that he is going to school when he goes elsewhere. Not being in any danger for telling the truth, he does not need to tell a lie.

I am sorry to say that in such cases as the child's declining to go to school, you generally cannot expect any intelligent aid or co-operation from the school itself. If you do not believe me, go to school and argue the question with the principal or the teacher. You will be surprised to see how little prepared they are to deal with such complications and how little they understand children,—that is, how little they know their own profession, which is not something extraordinary, as very few people know their own trade or profession. Of course, this applies to

the majority of the teachers, but fortunately not to all, as there are some few beautiful and honorable exceptions, although not so many as in France or in Germany.

Whenever the school is rather a source of misinformation than of education, as it has happened so often during and since the war of 1914-1919, it is the duty of intelligent and thinking parents to counteract the poison instilled by the teacher, by telling the child the real truth about existing conditions. The conflict resulting in the child's mind, while deplorable, is inevitable and is certainly more desirable than to leave the child with a wrong and misleading impression.

Where possible, progressive parents should co-operate to have their own school.

In very rare instances one of the parents is able to be the child's teacher, at least in the earlier years. Whenever this is possible, it is a blessing for the child and a great enjoyment and a profit to the parents, provided that the home teaching (it may take place in shops, factories, streets, parks, farms, museums, exhibitions, etc., and only from time to time at home) is based on rational ideas. If it follows the common school methods, it is worse than school teaching, and the latter, with all its defects, is preferable. By the way, the mother or the father who combines the necessary time, the required aptitudes and talents as well as the desire to teach his or her own child, would do well to invite two or three more children of about the same age and caliber to take part in the studies, works and plays. The writer has given to his child four

hours daily for about seven years during kindergarten and public school age.

Parents should visit the school as often as possible and should not be ashamed to criticize the teachers' work and the entire system. They should not forget that the schools are theirs. Organized meetings of the parents—preferably held in the school auditorium —and discussions concerning the theory and practice of education, as well as the difficulties encountered by them in the children's bringing-up, would be very desirable. All parents could benefit from an exchange of opinions and from the experiences of others.

Constant vigilance and control of the school would repay itself. This would force the teachers and the school authorities to be careful.

Whenever it is not absolutely necessary, it is preferable not to accompany the child to and from school, as that makes him rely less on himself and deprives him of an occasion to learn more by himself.

Mistakes of Radical Parents

Radical parents often make the mistake to teach the child empty, to him meaningless, phrases about capitalism and proletariat, to ask him to memorize and recite or declaim revolutionary poems, etc., believing that in this way they will convert him into a revolutionist.

While there is no limit to the things and facts and events and phenomena a child should learn when he is interested in them and if they are properly explained to him, it is foolish and entirely useless to fill up his mind with mere words, no matter how high sounding they are. They will not stick to him, as in that form they can never be assimilated.

But principally should we avoid to fall into this error because it is wrong to try to make a revolutionist of the child, just as it would be to do all in our power to change him into a reactionary. Our only duty is to help him develop himself. If your social ideas are right, you may reasonably expect that a rationally brought up child will naturally come to them. But let us never be absolutely certain that we are right. Let us rather add a grain of skepticism even to those ideas about which we are enthusiastic.

Among the conflicts between children and parents,

one kind consists in this, that the children make progress, become more advanced and leave their parents more or less far behind them. This is as old as humanity. I can imagine the primitive father, at the occasion of the discovery of fire, the greatest discovery of man, enraged against his children for adopting the new fad that will surely burn the world,—of course, after having clubbed the discoverer himself to death. Disagreements between parents and children concerning the right of the latter to chose their mates, or to change some conventional customs, or to associate with the apostle of a novel and strange religious sect or to subscribe to the latest astronomical theory contradicting the bible, are all of the same kind. They are natural where the parents are too conservative and recalcitrant, and lack open-mindedness and perspective. But they will never occur with tolerant and easily yielding parents, who, even if they fail to be persuaded, are willing to allow their children to have their own point of view and to act accordingly.

But here in the United States, among our immigrants, we see an interesting example of the reverse: many parents are progressive, sometimes quite radically minded, while their children are conservative. This is explained by the fact that the parents were converted to their ideas in Europe or in this country among their fellow-countrymen, while their children were abandoned completely to the influence of the Americanizing school, which often means to a reactionary influence. The children received a one-sided education and nothing to counteract or balance it.

The parents, in their ignorance of conditions in this country, having heard that this is a modern republic, seeing that the word liberty is so frequently pronounced in connection with the United States and having read that we once had an admirable war for independence, put their whole faith in our schools. The result was in the majority of the cases that their children grew up full of prejudices and with the desire to keep intact all that is old and venerable and to fight to a finish all new ideas and all that may result in a change of conditions.

Such parents are not altogether blameless. Being too busy acquiring knowledge and making propaganda among their shop companions, they have forgotten and neglected their own families, their wives and children. Even some of the best radical leaders, bent upon conquering a new world, have lost their own children, whom they have estranged, rarely talking to them, rarely playing with them. And now they reap what they have sown. They have largely earned the contempt of their offspring who are ashamed of their parents,—mere foreigners and radicals.

Perhaps another cause for this particular discrepancy between parents and children is the error of some of the parents not to live up to their principles, not knowing that nothing wins and convinces as much as the living action, and that words alone are sterile.

Sometimes this opposition of the children to their parents results in sad tragedies; but once the abyss yawns between them, there is no remedy. It is as elementary as the clouds or the rain.

Means and Aims

It is wrong to make a too great distinction between the means and the aim. Very often the only aim we are able to attain is the means by which we are striving toward it. The means *are* the aim. We may never accomplish what we set out to do, but our whole life is composed of means. Therefore, our means should be worthy of the final, perhaps never to be reached, aim.

Our behavior toward the child should be so that he may become naturally penetrated with this point of view, although he may not accept it in his later life as a line of conduct. And, as already pointed out in this book, the whole scheme of the child's bringing-up, as far as a scheme is possible or permissible, should be such that our aim be not to make of him a man. Nor should we make him feel that this must be his ultimate goal, as if the adult age is something perfect and beyond the need of correction. We must act in such a manner that the child gains the impression that the years of childhood are important in themselves, so that he should not feel his present weakness and should not keep on postponing important works for a later age.

Some Objections Answered

Many people, especially those who call themselves practical, believe sincerely that a rational bringing-up of the child will make of him "too much of an individual" and will force him to have a too hard struggle in his later life.

It all depends on what we understand by the word "practical". To my mind, to be practical means to be able to use all possible means which will make us happy. Of course, we may sometimes feel happy when we suffer or make ourselves uncomfortable for the sake of a dear friend. We may willingly and gladly sacrifice our freedom or even our life for our ideas, probably because, in the last analysis, we find more happiness in so doing than in living a quiet, safe life. But I cannot regard as happy or approaching the ideal of personal happiness all those whose life is nothing but a series of concessions to society, the family, traditions, conventions, prejudices and superstitions; those are a mere feather in the wind. Those who recklessly throw away their own individuality, who every day adjourn the fulfillment of their desires

until death overcomes them, have turned their back to happiness and have walked away in the opposite direction. They may make money, they may achieve a reputation as "good" citizens, as "honorable" men and women, but they are unhappy—and consequently not practical.

And as to the objection that a strong individual has a too hard struggle with his fellow-men, life is nothing but struggle and without struggle there is no true life. Struggle is not undesirable.

Of course, if you have no opinion of your own, if you have no will, if you look in every respect like your neighbors, if you are not yourself, if you efface yourself in the general current, if you follow the crowd, if you never affirm yourself, your way will be easy. But is this life? Or is it suicide? And is it worth to pay such a high price in order to facilitate one's contest? Is it practical,—practical from a loftier point of view? Is this mental and moral Procrustean operation worthy of its results?

Some base their objection to our ideas on the fear that rationally brought up children will be *precocious.*

We keep our children so much back intellectually, we waste their time and retard their development in school and at home so much, that any normal child who has matured mentally in the right time, will seem precocious in comparison with the others. Instead of calling a prodigy a child who wants to know certain things before our "programs" allow him to do so, we should call the other children—and ourselves—belated or back numbers.

It is not true that a child under rational education becomes ripe too soon, that he loses his innocence too early, that he possesses less of that rich, great and childish imagination which makes him weave his impossible dreams. The more real socientific knowledge he has, the more historic events he has learned, the more beautiful things he has seen, the richer his fancy,—provided we have not tried to destroy his childishness intentionally. I have known children who were held as exceptionally bright, but who, on closer acquaintance, proved to be just ordinary children who had had unusual opportunities,—opportunities which are exceptional at present, but which should be afforded every youngster.

After all, to be prepared early, to have as many of the various perplexing childish questions as possible answered sooner than it is customary, means to begin life earlier, means to prolong life and to accomplish more than is usually the case, which, of course, far from being harmful, is a great advantage.

Children cannot all have the same degree of brilliancy, but they all need the fullest possibilities to develop and learn. We cannot always discover their talents or future talents, as frequently the best, the most gifted ones seem stupid or below the average, either because they are too absorbed in their own dreams to be interested in common, every-day matters, or because they are misunderstood, or because they are not permitted to do what they prefer, or further because they would not show their capacities

to their inferior parents and teachers, fearing instinctively to expose themselves to ridicule.

Finally, if I knew that real precocity were possible, I should not see any valid reason why exceptional children might not be allowed to become precocious. But I am convinced that there is no precocious child as this word is commonly understood.

I would object, though, to all cramming and stuffing methods used for the purpose of making of the child a learned and serious person at any cost. This would violate his individuality, would curtail his happy childish hours and would transform him into a monstrous being. I do not believe in the usefulness of learning the alphabet or reading and writing at three, of studying Greek at a very early age, or, as it were, of buttering the child's bread with Virgil verses.

Final Remarks

Among public spirited men, that is among those people who would probably be best fitted to become educators, there are but few interested in the child. They do not realize the importance of the child: they do not see that he represents the future and that he is the best material with which to work.

Rational education does not foist on the child any beliefs, theories or ideas, but leaves his mind free and open. It always gives a reason or looks for a reason why anything is said or done. It listens to the child and encourages him to express himself. It tells him the truth.

At the first glance a rationally brought up child may appear to be like other children, but he is different. In the same way a chronically ill man may look externally like a perfectly healthy person, but the intimate life of one is entirely unequal to that of the other; the function of the organs, the condition of the cells in one and the other differ as much as health differs from disease. The experienced eye will not fail to recognize and to single out the child who has been

brought up freely. His movements, his gestures, his talk, his behavior, his spirit will be distinct from those of any other child.

I do not claim that children educated along rational lines will become the men and women whom you or I would like, or that they would satisfy your ideal of men and women or mine. This is not necessary. They may be better than we desire them to be; they may be too advanced for us to understand them. But they will be characters, they will be internally free individuals, and only such individuals can free the world from its present bondage and misery.

THIRD PART

Instances From Life

The following brief notes are meant to serve as illustrations to the foregoing theoretical discussion. They represent but a few of my numerous observations gathered through my direct and indirect association with children. They have been taken at random and published without any arrangement.

On the Ferry Boat.—A woman with her five year old boy. She gives him a lesson how to lie.

—The man there will carry you away, if you don't behave.

—If you don't sit still, the policeman will arrest you.

She does not let him free for one minute. She does not allow him to run or walk, although there is not the slightest danger in doing so. She forbids him to take off his cap and to stand closer to that side from which he could observe the passing big ship which interests him so very much and which is certainly instructive for him.

She slaps him on his finger when, with his childish frankness, he points to a woman with a ridiculous hat. She objects to any of his critical remarks. A friend who knows her informs me that she is an advocate of "free speech" among adults.

In the Train.—At Summit, New Jersey, our train is being hitched on to another train. The operation is very interesting and worth watching. Still, most parents are reluctant to let their children stand near the door. But this mother seems to be more intelligent than the average; she says nothing when her little girl leaves her seat and, full of curiosity, is absorbed in the spectacle. However, the other passengers are restless. One woman goes over to the child and whispers something to her. The little girl does not heed her. The conductor gives her a piece of his mind, but cannot convince her that to stand near the door, inside the car, is dangerous, because it is not. She continues to be attentive to the approaching train and to the trainman who is ready to couple it to our train. An old man makes her a little speech, which is untrue from the beginning to the end. But she brushes him aside and he becomes angry.

—You ought to behave yourself! What is the matter with you?

And he fails to see that he is the one who does not behave and that there is something the matter with the grown-up people.

A Failure. — The mother has gone to market. The nine year old boy wants to surprise her. He knows that when she returns she will start to cook and she will need hot water. He fills a vessel with water and puts it on the fire. He is happy at the thought that his mother will be glad and will praise his foresight and skill. But the receptable cracks, the

water leaks out and the boy, awfully frightened and in haste to hide his failure, the cause of which he does not understand, wipes the gas range quickly with a clean table-cloth, the only cloth in sight. The mother, returning, finds him in this predicament and, after long mutual explanations, accompanied by the child's tears and by the mothers's promise of a punishment (to be administered by the father, as she says) worthy of the crime, the little one learns incidentally that his mistake consisted in having used an earthen vessel instead of the aluminum pot.

The mother remains convinced that it is wrong to let children, especially boys, meddle in kitchen work. She is mistaken. This last failure was due precisely to the fact that the boy was never permitted to go into the kitchen.

A Party.—After school time. Six little girls sitting around a table in an ice-cream store. Talking. They disturb nobody. Just toward the end, when they are ready to go, a woman comes in, pale with anger, walks up to the group, gesticulates to one of the children, shakes her violently by the shoulders and tells her something in a low voice.

—But, mother, it is Nellie's birthday, and we had a little party, replies the girl in a loud whisper.

The mother again tells her something that I cannot hear.

—But, mother, we did nothing bad.

Another conversation, inaudible to me, during which the child is blushing and the mother is making

quick gestures, ends with the word "home!" uttered by the woman. And she pushes the girl toward the door. The child cries and goes out.

Guests.—Evening. There are guests in the house. One of them is particularly interesting. He has just returned from a long voyage and talks charmingly about his experiences. The boy listens attentively. Undoubtedly, he is learning more real geography tonight than he has learned in school for a whole year.

But the father asks him to go to bed, as the boy must get up in time to go to school the next morning. After a few weak protests and tears, the child leaves the room, while the grown-up people continue to stay and talk around the lamp. All are in good cheer. The intellectual atmosphere is delightful. Nobody thinks of the boy.

Matches.—The father has dropped the match box and orders the child to pick up the matches. The latter obeys. A few minutes later the child drops the box and the father beats him severely.

Meat.—Father and mother are at the theatre. Johnnie, nine years old, is alone with his aunt, the school teacher, a young girl. She serves him supper. He never likes meat and his mother has despaired to make him eat it. But now his aunt puts some meat before him. He says: "You know, auntie, that I hate meat."

—But it is good for you and you ought to eat it.

—Oh, please . . . . I cannot.

—Just taste it. The way I fixed it up, you'll like it.

The boy feels that reasoning will not help. He knows by experience that his only weapon in such cases is lying. He makes believe that he tastes the meat.

—It is not good.

—You did not taste it.

—I did.

—You did not.

—Yes, I did.

—You liar!

And the aunt gives him a "sound beating", not because he did not want to eat the meat, as she explains, but "because he lied." And she does not comprehend why he lied.

A Song.—The parents and all the adults are supposed to be infallible. They never break anything. They do not trust their children, whom they accuse of being mischievous and careless; they forbid them to handle anything fragile. One little boy, who is just as neglectful or as careful as nature has made him, has discovered that the grown-up folks, including his old grand'ma, make mistakes almost as frequently as he. And he has found a way how to express his scorn for their imaginary precision. Whenever an adult in the house breaks or spills something, he sings:

—I am glad I am not the only one, I am glad I am not the only one, I am glad I am not the only one . . .

And so forth for about five minutes. He has a special tune for his song. And the grown-ups give him an opportunity to repeat his song several times daily.

Up! Up!—The child is six years old. He can jump and run and even climb some trees. When he goes out with his mother, he is not allowed to make a step without holding her hand and, when they reach the threshold of any door, be it at the railroad station or in a store, that is when the foot must be lifted half an inch or an inch, she stops and tells him:

—Up! Up!

Something that should never be told any child, not even a baby who just begins to walk.

Not Ordered.—A private school in the West with pretentions of modern ideas in education. I ask one boy why he does a certain thing. He hesitates for a while, then: "Because teacher told me to do it." I turn to the principal who escorts me and shows me the institution, and I begin to murmur something about "ordering". But the educator interrupts me:

—In this place the boys are never ordered to do so and so. They are made to want to do it!

What is the difference? And where is freedom?

From theory to practice. . . .

Help Not Wanted.—The child is on his tricycle. His father wants to help him. Evidently he wishes to play too. The child refuses his help and cries.

Father says: "It will be easier for you."

—But I don't want.

He prefers to have a harder and not an easier work to do.

The father is cross and ceases to talk to the child.

Of course, it is a bad child. Why did he not let his father rob him of some fun, pleasure, happiness?

His Majesty, the Doctor!—A difficult confinement. One physician is busy with the mother, in the next room. Another one has just arrived, and, while he puts on his long, white gown before entering the adjoining chamber, the little boy and the father watch him doing it. The boy interrupts the silence and remarks to his father:

—The other doctor did not remove his coat and did not put on a gown. I don't like him.

—This is not your business. You cannot sign your name yet and you criticize a doctor!

Who Is Foolish?—The child: "I know when it rains."

Somebody in the house: "When?"

—When there are clouds, it rains.

—Sometimes there are clouds without rain.

—Oh, those are the funny clouds!

The mother: "Stop that! It's foolish talk. Are you not ashamed of yourself?"

She does not realize that she is breaking up a conversation which may have become an instructive lesson for the child.

A Turkey.—They had a turkey and the child admired him incessantly. One day an old aunt asked the child in that well-known annoying manner:

—Do you like me?

He answered:

—Yes.

She insisted, stupidly:

—Why do you like me?

—I like you because you look like a turkey! came the answer.

The child was punished and never understood why. He was really sincere in comparing his aunt with the wonderful turkey.

Rocks.—The train passes slowly through a narrow and rocky gorge. The little girl is admiring the multi-colored bare cut in the stone mountain. But the father attracts her attention to the other side which is covered with some vegetation.

—Don't look there! There is nothing to see, nothing but rocks.

In his ignorance he does not realize that rocks could be extremely interesting.

Toys and Garbage.—A mother and a little boy walk together in the street. I happen to be behind them. The child sees a toy in a garbage can and grabs it with avidity. The mother, without a word, snatches it from his hands and throws it away. The child looks at her for a while, then he runs after the toy and picks it up again. He is now at quite a distance from

his mother. I hasten my step and, as I reach the boy, I start a talk with him, at the end of which I explain him in a few words what garbage means, how unclean it is, how it could spread disease. He lifts his arms and hurls the toy as far as he can.

Knitting.—The mother travels with her three girls. She knits and they all must knit. From time to time the children, desirous to see the scenery, steal a glance through the window of the car. Now we are passing a high wooded hill with an isolated house on its summit. The view is wonderful. The youngest child exclaims with rapture: "See that little house up there, mothie?"

The mother, undisturbed, knits and signs her to continue her work.

—Sssst. . . .

Display.—The three year old child has stopped before a window where many pretty things are displayed. It is great, it is marvelous! His enthusiasm is at the highest pitch. His mother becomes impatient, drags the crying child away, and says: "What is there to be seen? Nothing interesting! You are crazy!"

A little while later the mother stops before another window, where a milliner displays her art. Now the child becomes impatient, but he is held there by force.

An Object of Art.—The same child, a little further, in the park, finds a piece of carved wood, a remnant

of some furniture. He thinks it is an admirable object and, happy and beaming with joy, brings it to his mother, as a present. She flings it away disdainfully. The child weeps bitterly.

What Is a Statue?—The father and his little boy are in the open autobus. The child: "What is that, daddy?"

—That is a statue.

—What is a statue?

—A statue is a statue!

Dangerous Curiosity.—The theatre is full of children. A show for the little ones is given. Near me is a young woman with a little boy. Between the acts he assails her with questions. Most of the time she does not answer. For the tenth time he asks: "How much does it cost down-stairs?"

At last she bursts out: "He wants to know everything! Soon he'll want to know how much the whole theatre costs!"

Hair.—The child asks his father why grown-up people have hair on their bodies. The father, very embarrassed, says "the boy is spoiled" and "a child must not ask such questions" and "he'll know it anyhow when he'll be older". But fortunately the uncle, an intelligent man, is here. He explains that hair on the body grows when we begin to become mature, that the quadrupeds have it everywhere, that we have lost most of it during our evolution from other animal states and that we do not know why we have what is left.

—May be when you will be a big man you will find out why.

Who Is Stupid?—The child has among his playthings a chair three inches high. A few adult relatives surround him and try to have fun at his expense. They ask him idiotic questions and they laugh at their own cleverness. One of them orders the child, who is three years old, to sit down on the tiny chair. He shrugs his shoulders.

—Well, why don't you sit down?

—'Cause I cannot!

—Why?

—'Cause!

—Because it is too small, you stupid little thing!

Of course, he knew it as well as they, but it was so obvious that it did not need to be told.

Too Booky.—The mother had been a teacher before her marriage; probably that is why her children know less about nature and are more cranky and unhappy than others. She seems to possess but one method of imparting knowledge—books. And she feeds them with books. Therefore, when they come to the country, they are little ignoramuses in comparison to other children. One asks: "Why do potatoes need leaves?" Another one does not like the woods, because they are "dirty", their ground being littered with so many dry leaves and not being neatly swept like her room. She is wondering: "Why all these leaves and stones?"

Instructive Dialogues.—A mother of my acquaintance whose conversations with her child I have often overheard, always succeeds in elaborating and developing the child's questions into a series of dialogues,—that is, when he is willing to listen to her. For instance, the sinking of a ship was the origin of talks on voyages, steamships, the sea, icebergs, life-saving, wireless telegraph, fishes, steamship companies, emigration, differences of passengers (first, second and third cabin), etc. Burglaries, assassinations, as read in the newspapers, give rise to questions of morality, during which, as a rule, the mother listens more than she talks.

Talking of a bridge, she does not fail to emphasize the accidents during its construction, the perils to the workers. By the way, she always seizes the occasion to show how much of our civilization is due to mental and manual labor.

Here is a sample of a full sequence of talks during an actual walk in the street, talks suggested by what the child saw and by the questions he asked: A man with one leg, war, industrial and railroad accidents, amputation.—Display of kitchen utensils, their prices, the importance of cooking.—Taxidermist, animals, birds in cages.—Florist, flowers, hot houses.—Stopping for a long time to see pavement repairing, all sorts of pavement, horses' feet, horse-shoes, work of the horse, his mildness, other domestic animals.—Abnormal feet made of plaster of Paris at a show window.

As this mother is unable to answer many of the child's questions, after such a walk she has to look

up several things in the encyclopedia or other books and show him pictures.

A Strike Breaker.—In a workingman's family. A little boy, hearing his parents and their friends talk about strikes, says: "When I'll be a man, I'll be a strike breaker." The adults are infuriated and begin to heap insults on him. He runs away into another room, crying. One man follows him and asks him slowly and patiently what he had meant to say.

—I'll give the strikers so much money, that they'll win the strike, so I'll break it, wouldn't I? retorts the child.

We should not judge a child superficially, but should try to understand him thoroughly.

Bottles.—Here is an example of the surprising conclusions drawn by children: After a conversation on glass, windows, the lack of window-panes in the past, on light, air and bottles, somebody remarks that of late the bottle industry has been completely revolutionized, so much so that where they needed eighty workers to manufacture twenty thousand bottles, now five suffice. A boy who listened unobserved all the time suddenly says:

—Then seventy five are free and can stay home with their boys!

The Real Book.—A girl, ten, returns from her vacation. The father complains that "the whole summer she did not open a book." I question her and find out

that she saw the bluebird, the bees, the chipmunk, the cow licking the calf, a wing of a dead dragon-fly, she learned to milk the cow, she picked cherries, she helped work the garden, she bathed in the creek, she climbed the highest hill with other children, she became "all black" running in the sun, and many other things.

Of course, she "opened a book",—the biggest book of all!

The Engine.—Again, misunderstanding the child. At the railroad station a little girl is watching with amazement the engineer and the trainman manoeuvering the locomotive. She sees it as a giant work and is wondering why they are so quiet. She asks: "Why don't they say something?" But her father mocks at her: "Don't be so foolish! What do you want them to say?"

Dolls.—Children are so accustomed to being called "dollies" that they do not pay any longer attention to the meaning of this word. They do not know that their parents are doing their best to make dolls of the little ones. But one child resented the epithet:
—I am not a doll, I am a big boy!

Which?—A contradiction discovered by a child. He says to his mother: "Sometimes you say I am big and I ought to know better; at other times you say I am a little boy and should not mix in when big people talk. Which is true?"

Sincerity.—A socialist writer accompanied by a four year old little girl. He calls her, he wants her

to shake hands with me. She refuses. He threatens to hit her if she does not obey instantly. He repeats the order, he scolds her. At last he succeeds in bending the child's will. But now I decline to hold out my hand to her. She goes away. But presently she comes back and lingers around. Then, suddenly emboldened, she asks: "Do I have to love everybody?"

—Yes, he answers.

I ask him: "Do *you* love everybody?"

—No, but she does not need to know that; besides, I do not want her to show whom she does not like.

No Reasons Given.—A father and his little boy are waiting for the train at a small village station. The child stands near the railroad tracks. The father takes him by the hand and, without saying a word, drags him away forcibly. A few minutes later the child is again near the rails. The father pulls him away and beats him. But after a while the boy has returned there, although his eyes are red with crying. Something fascinating attracts him now: the huge engine with its big light, like some legendary monster, arrives and becomes larger and larger in the twilight. He is being removed again and kept at the father's side.

The father never thought of talking to his boy, of telling him that to stay on and near the rails was dangerous or of explaining him how an accident might happen.

Smoking.—Somebody, himself a smoker, writes me that he caught his ten-year old boy smoking and wants my advice. I reply that, as the father is a tobacco

fiend, he has no right to demand from his boy not to smoke, unless the father confesses that he is wrong. The father should cease smoking and then he will easily find the hygienic arguments against this habit. But he should use no force, as it will be futile: the boy will smoke secretly and will learn how to conceal his cigarettes.

Birds.—Another letter. Her boy likes birds and wants her to buy him a canary. She wishes to know my opinion. I would tell the child that if he really loves birds, he should not encourage the commerce with them; he should go into the parks and woods and observe them, studying them from a distance.

Drawings.—A little girl is very fond of drawing. Instead of studying her lessons, she draws. She draws everything she sees. She is backward in school, especially in arithmetic. She shows much talent in her illegitimate art. She may become an artist or may lose her inclination to art before she is mature; nobody knows. But her mother forbids her to draw, because "it is useless" and forces her to make her home work. The child draws on all scraps of paper, on the wall, on the table, as soon as her mother turns her back.

Fear.—A mother brings me her little boy for a consultation. He is ill, and she traces his illness to a certain day last week when he played with other boys and waded for hours in the water up to the knees; after which, being afraid that his mother might punish him severely, he did not come home for two days.

There is no doubt that if the child had no reason to fear, if he knew that his mother was good-hearted, he would have come home on time.

Admission.—One woman, having read an article of mine on obedience, writes me that I am right: "If my boy had obeyed me, he would have never learned to swim and I am so glad he knows."

Another woman informs me that she is happy that her son did not listen to her, that he left her when he was young, that he traveled much and wrote a beautiful book about his travels.

Money or Mother?—I am his family physician and adviser in many questions and now he comes for an advice: He has a store and three small children; he would earn more, if his wife, the children's mother, would leave the house on the hands of a servant girl and would help him in the store.

My opinion is that it is better for the children if he makes less money and if they have their mother all the time.

A Bad Boy.—They all call him a bad boy. He is frolicsome and turbulent and plays tricks to everybody. He is exceptionally strong for his six years. Being my neighbor in the country, he comes often to see me and, if he has nothing to do, he disturbs me from my work. But when I give him tools and a job, he performs it well and leaves me alone. He needs work, he needs an outlet for his strength and energy; this is the cause of his so-called "badness".

Somebody told him: "I should like to send you for milk, but you are too wild. You'll spill the milk."

—No, I will not!

He insists on going and brings the milk unharmed.

Pride.—A mother tells me how neglectful her eight year old boy is. He never dresses himself alone, or he begins to dress and forgets to finish.

Without looking at the child, I say:

—Poor child! May be it is not his fault. I suppose he cannot dress himself, he is probably a cripple. He may be half blind, or lame, or something. He is not to be blamed.

The boy becomes angry and says:

—No, I am not a cripple. I can so dress myself.

—Then you are too weak.

—No, I am not!

A few days later the mother came to announce me that the child was all changed and that a great improvement has occurred in him.

Blocks.—His father bought Jimmie a set of building blocks. But each time the child begins to play, his father comes and meddles with them.

—Oh, daddy!

—Just a minute; I want to show you something.

One day Jimmie said to his father: "Here, dad, I give you my blocks so that you can play with them, and you buy me another set."

The Smart Father.—"You see, here in the yard I built a little circular railroad—a constant railroad,

they call it—and the boys never play with it. At the beginning they liked it very much. But they got tired of it very soon. It cost me a lot of money."

I am not astonished and I do not blame the boys.

A Quarrel.—Usually it is the mothers who consider it their duty to hang rings on their little girls' ears. But in this case the mother does not care to have her child wear ear-rings. However, the girl wants some and the result is a fierce quarrel between mother and daughter. They come to me and here is my judgment: All that the mother can do is to explain to the girl the absurdity of this remnant of savagery. If this does not help, the child should ornate herself to her heart's desire. She will understand in time her mother's arguments.

Threats.—In the street. A mother and a three-year old child. She wants to go to the right, he goes to the left. She stands still and calls him. He does not stop. She says: "I am going to Santa Claus." He does not turn his head; he walks on.

"I am going away without you, good bye, good bye!" He walks on. "Bye bye!" He does not care.

A man passes. "The man is going to whip you." The child glances at the man and continues his way undisturbed.

He is far now. More than half a long block away. She calls out loud: "I am going to cry!" But he does not seem to be moved and does not interrupt his forward march. All these threats are useless; he has

already enough experience with his mother to know that none of them is true. At any rate it is easy to understand that all of them together cannot be true.

Finally, she runs after him, catches him and takes him away by force.

Complications.—The little girl wants to open the window-shade. The people in the house do not let her do it. She cries. They say she is bad. Feeling offended, she cries more. Her father beats her because she cries. She is angry and in her rage she breaks a drinking glass. She is whipped again. She becomes wilder. They compel her to sit in a corner. She resists. She is flogged and kept by force in the corner. She tears down her silk ribbon from her head and stamps it with her feet. Now the mother slaps the child's face. The latter strikes her back. The mother shouts: "You are no more my child!" The father undresses her and puts her out into the hall.

The father declares the child abnormal and says he'll have to take her to the doctor. The girl, hearing this and being afraid of the doctor, becomes terribly boisterous. The neighbor comes out. An altercation between the mother and the neighbor follows.

The mother, herself now sick and nervous, pushes the child into the house, pounding her in the back. The child hits her mother again; the latter pommels her some more; the tumult increases. The child cries until she falls asleep.

Who is guilty of this drama? Is it the child?

A Fine Warning.—Mother and boy are out for a walk. He climbs on the back of a bench. She gives him a thrashing and, while he cries with pain, she says: "Don't do that, you'll fall and get hurt!"

Going to Bed.—I am requested to give an advice in this matter: The child goes late to bed and in the morning it is difficult to wake him up for school; and he seems to be very anxious not to miss school. The best thing would be not to wake him. Let him be late a few times. Besides, let there be no guests in the house at night and let nothing happen that could excite him.

Kissing.—The child is punished by his parents for his refusal to kiss his grand'ma.

Possibly he does not like her. Should he affect a sham love? Would hypocrisy satisfy the parents?

Or perhaps he likes grand' mother, but does not feel a necessity to express his attachment to her by kissing.

At all events it is nobody's concern but the child's.

Stealing.—A little girl of eight stole some money from her mother in order to give a "party" to her little friends.

The mother should have known that her child required society and should have granted her the money necessary to arrange the entertainment openly, not on the sly.

A Reason Given.—Mother talks with somebody. The child interrupts her all the time and wants to tell her something. The mother says: "I must talk to this man. I'll soon be done. If you do not let me, I'll have to stop speaking and listen to you; and the man has no time to wait."

Another time, the child orders the mother in a very rough way to give him something. She says: "You know, this belongs to me, and if you are unkind, I do not feel like giving it to you."

Drilling.—A picture lies on my desk. The child wants it badly. I offer it to him. His eyes gleam with pleasure. But he looks to his mother; she makes him a sign, and he says: "No, I don't want it!" And a cloud passes over his features.

Thanks!—I give a present to a four-year old little boy. A nice boat. He is happy, he is excited. His eyes tell me how glad he is. It is a great event. But his mother bothers him with such a prosaic request: "Say thanks!" As if his eyes did not express his gratitude!

Another child. His father sends him to me on an errand. I take the object he brings me and he is so content that he exclaims: "Thank you!" and runs away.

Consistency.—Says a little girl: "Teacher always claims that it is not nice to point to people, and she herself points with her finger to every girl in the class room:— 'You, you, you, are you a baby? You, stand up! You, sit down!' "

The Effect of Words.—In a flat, on the fifth floor. A four-year old boy is sitting on my knees and I tell him a story. His mother arrives and accuses him of having thrown a milk bottle through the window into the street. She punished him, but the next day he threw her shoes out. I put him down from my lap and become serious. I explain him the possible consequences of his act. He argues that he saw nobody pass in the street while he threw the bottle out, and as to the shoes, they are not lost, as his father found them. I insist on the possibility of terrible outcomes and illustrate my contention with actual facts. He listens attentively. I say: "Look here. I am a doctor and I always try to make the people as healthy as I can, while you are doing things that could hurt them. So, you see, we cannot be friends."

He is deeply stirred, he reflects for a minute, his lips begin to move as if to cry, and he stammers: "But—but—but I'll not do it any more!"

In A House of Lies.—The father, a second-hand lawyer, always claims to have wonderful successes everywhere, but they are all imaginary. He cheats others and cheats himself. He considers himself one of the greatest men. He thinks nobody tells the truth, anyway. The mother believes or pretends to believe that she has marvelous talents, that she is being praised by everybody and that she meets the most distinguished and the richest people in town.

All the children are liars. The lie is usually toler-

ated, but from time to time a child is punished for lying.

One daughter is married and her home is already a house of lies.

The Cup.—The child broke a beautiful Japanese cup. Nobody upbraided him for that. But he began to cry and he felt so unhappy that the father had to kiss and console him. Certainly there was no need of a punishment.

And why did he break it? Because he wanted to wash it, and, instead of leaving it on the table while he went to get the basin, he took the cup with him. It did not occur to him that he needed both hands to carry the basin.

There is no other way to learn these things than by doing them and making mistakes.

The Promise.—The little boy quarrelled with his mother and hit her, although his parents had never stricken him. His father and mother did not talk to him that evening and he went to bed without their customary kiss. He said he was sorry to have offended them.

But the next day he forgot all about it and was bad again. He gave his mother a blow and this time she returned the compliment. He cried and was very sad and regretful.

Nevertheless, when his mother wanted to make him promise that he'll never beat her again, he said, with

that wonderful childish logic and honesty, that he could not tell what he was going to do in the future.

His father tried to explain him what a promise meant, but to no avail. Then his father asked him whether he will throw himself into the sea to be drowned or into the fire to be burned alive. The child said: "No!"—"How then," asked the father, "do you know that you will not do it, although it is in the future?"—And so, gradually, the child understood what to promise something meant. But even then he did not promise not to beat his mother; he said he wished never to do it again. And he never did it afterwards.

Worry.—A five-year old boy used to go to a kindergarten about twenty minutes distance from his house and had to cross several very busy streets with many fast vehicles. His mother always accompanied him there and back.

Once at noon time he ran out of school as quickly as he could so that he would not be seen and would go home all by himself. His mother saw him and followed him. He was pretty with his blond hair in the wind, swift as a deer. And he was conscious of his bravery.

For several days he went presumably alone to school, until he noticed his mother walking after him and watching him. Then he cried and said that he was able to go to school unaccompanied.

No argument helped, least of all the possibility of

his getting run over. He was a big boy, he knew how to cross the streets, he was careful, and so on.

But when his mother told him that she worried and suffered at the thought that a misfortune might happen, that even if he was not afraid, *she* was, he said: "All right, you will come with me, because I don't want you to worry."

However, a short time later she ceased to escort him and he went to school alone.

Enoch.—A father believed his little girl to be feeble-minded because she did not want to pronounce the words "enough" and "laugh" in the usual fashion, but "enoch", "lauch". She had a theory about it: she thought that hers was the correct way and that the people were all wrong.

I found the child not only perfectly normal, but even superior in intelligence to the average child.

Responsibility.—Charlie was the strongest disturbing factor in a certain group of children. To obtain order it was necessary to put him as an overseer over the others; then he was perfectly quiet and peaceful.

The Incubator.—A little girl of four once asked her parents where the babies came from. They did not know what to answer and as the child insisted, the father took her to Coney Island (near New York) and showed her the incubator with the babies, saying that they were bought there. The child believed it and was satisfied.

But her married aunt, who used to come often to the house, always complained that she could not become a mother and envied those who had children.

One day the little girl left her toys and came to her father in a great hurry.

—Why does not auntie buy a baby from the incubator? You said she had plenty of money.

Piggie.—Whenever an adult said to Tommie: "You, pig!" he answered: "Gee, I would like to be a pig." And he was sincere. It is not an insult to a child to be compared with animals, because he likes them. By the way, nothing is an insult if we do not regard it as such.

The Thief.—Billie, three, walks with his mother in the street. At the grocer's he goes straight to the fruit counter and helps himself to an apple. Thereupon, a shower of imprecations. His mother, in despair, thinks he has "bad instincts" and "some day he will be a thief".

She does not realize that he is more honest than all of us, just because he has not yet discovered the notion of private property and because "stealing" does not figure yet in his vocabulary.

Destruction.—She is already a young lady and is still entirely under her mother's influence. Her own will has always been entirely submerged and now it is altogether destroyed. Her mother holds her with iron clutches, in a tight grip,—of course, in a "modern"

way, always calling her "darling", never inflicting any punishment on her, a polite tyranny, as it were. She never made a move without her mother or her mother's consent. Her mother's mind is her opinion in everything.

And if you know her, you will not be astonished to hear her say, at her age: "Mother says I am cold without my sweater."

Filial Love.—A man of thirty confesses that he hates his father and mother and is glad not to live in the same town with them.

—Why?

—Their whole conduct was always awfully mean. I see it now, because I know what they have made of me and how they could have treated me.

—But what was their worst fault according to your opinion?

—The worst? The worst? . . . I hate them mainly because they whipped me so much.

The Truant.—He is seven. One day he says he will not go to school and stays home. Notwithstanding his parents' insistence, he would not disclose the reason. The next day his mother chases him out; she stands at the house door with a rod and watches him attentively. But, arrived near the school entrance, he manages to slip away. In the afternoon he returns home and admits that he has not been in school and that he does not intend to go there any longer. The next morning, when his parents attempt to carry him

to school by force, he fights them with all his might. At last, they have to give it up. A few days later a truant officer comes to inquire about him; this time he is brought to school in spite of his resistance.

The principal, an elderly woman, lectures the parents, that is, insults them profusely, hands the mother a ruler and bids her to strike the boy. As the mother does it too soft-heartedly, the principal takes the ruler and shows her how it should be done. Still, after all this torture and humiliation, the child declares he will not go to school. If he is forced to stay there to-day, he says, he will not return to-morrow.

Then the principal decides that the boy is "not in his wits and should be examined by a doctor."

The mother comes with him to me for a consultation and tells me the story, which is corroborated by the boy and later by the father and by the principal herself, to whom I went for information.

I examine the child and find him perfectly normal in every respect. Surmising that he has a grudge against his mother and that he may not speak frankly in her presence, I send her out of the consulting room and try to gain the boy's confidence. With great difficulty I succeed and he tells me the reason why he would not go to school: A few days ago he came to school with a new suit of clothes and another boy threw some water over it. His protests to the teacher, instead of bringing him justice, resulted in abuses and punishment.

—Teacher was not fair, she was mean. . .

And his tears choke him.

He could not bear the affront. He is a bit more sensitive than the average child, but he was not wrong.

At last, he suggests a compromise: He will go to school if he is transferred to another school.

Was the child guilty in this case?

His Opinions.—Says a boy of seventeen, an apprentice tool-maker: "My father is always on the side of the boss. He says I am right, but I must not tell my opinion. Why not? It was the same thing when I was in school. He used to tell me that I must never oppose the teacher, but that I'll be free to say what I want when I'll have finished school. And now I must not open my mouth.

"An Awful Boy".—He is sixteen. All those who know him think he is "awful". He has all the defects in the world and he will certainly become a criminal. Mothers warn their children not to have any dealings with him.

I have a talk with him. We become more and more acquainted. His physique is attractive. His language is coarse and it is true that he did not care to finish his primary school, but he goes to work assiduously. Moreover, as from the country place where he lives with his parents there is no later suitable train that should bring him in time to the city, to the shipyard where he is working, he must get up at half past four in the morning, which he does. His work is dangerous.

My investigations show me that at home he is always cheerful and obliging. He sweeps the floor,

he carries his sister's baby in his arms. He regularly brings his weekly wages to his mother, except for his smoking money.

Upon further inquiry I learn that these are not his parents, that he is their adopted son and that they have always persecuted him and burdened him with the hardest labor in the house, to which, by the way, he never objected. They have created around him a tradition of badness which has taken root among all the relatives and neighbors. They have habituated him so much with all sorts of indignities, they have offended his self-respect so often, that he no longer resents being called "bad boy" and other names with opprobrious meanings.

So far he is not bad at all, but if he does become a "bad man" as they assure me he will, this will be due to those who more or less have had his fate in their hands.

Experience.—A boy of fifteen. He longs to become a farmer, but his mother is strongly opposed to his project. She claims to have experience and to know how difficult the farmer's life is and how "dirty" his work.

One morning the boy turns his back to the malodorous tenement house in which he lives and to the congested district where he has been brought up and leaves furtively for the country. For weeks the parents are in great agony; they do not know where the boy is. At last a letter arrives. He describes how happy

he is, how beautiful the place is, how he likes the work even though it is very hard.

Immediately his mother is off. She takes the train and within a few hours she is at the farm. She finds him in overalls, carrying a milk pail. With tears and threats she succeeds in taking him home.

At home she describes to the family the barn near which she saw him and adds some exaggerations of her own.

—But, mother, I don't work in the barn only. The other day I helped ploughing too.

No argument is powerful enough to change her mind.

—Well, ma, what do you want me to become?

—I want you to have a nice, respectable profession.

—For instance, what?

—For instance, a druggist.

Poor, blind woman! What a distorted viewpoint! She is not aware of the fact that any barn is preferable to a drug store and to its so-called laboratory,—and this from the standpoint both of physical and moral cleanliness.

She insists and, of course, uses her irresistible weapon, her tears, whose magic effect she knows very well. He becomes an apprentice in a drug store and one of his duties is to sweep the floor several times daily. Later he might go to the college of pharmacy.

However, he does not like his new occupation, and after a short stay, he quits.

And now, for several years, he passes from one

trade to another, still hoping and yearning to become a farmer and to live in the country. He is unhappy. In the end, disgusted, he enters the army, which is for his mother a worse blow than if he had remained at the farm.

FOURTH PART

Sex and the Child

Sex Morality

Those who are convinced of the principles of rational education will have no difficulty in finding their way to solve the problem of the sexual bringing-up of the child. It is much easier than it is generally conceded. The perplexities about which many of the parents and educators complain in this matter are due to their own fault, to the obstacles and obstructions with which they themselves beset their task.

The majority of the parents, alas, see no problem at all; they ignore its existence and they do not even guess that there is a connection between sex and childhood; but then, they are in complete darkness concerning the particular psychology of children altogether. Their opinion is that a child should know nothing about sex, and they believe that if he does find out something, it is always through outside influences which cannot be but obnoxious and which make him licentious, dissolute, immoral. They do not dream that the sex function, although less pronounced than in the adult, is alive in the child and that they themselves are frequently the unwilling and more or

less innocent instruments which break down his so-called morals. They would be unable to explain how they imagine the final passage from child to man and woman, they would be at a loss to tell us when, at what age, sex ceases to be immoral, because they think it is always so.

Probably we would have nothing to say in sex matters and none would suffer from the lack of sex education if we had no standard of sex morality at all and if sexual relations were not so intimately associated with our social and economic conditions.

Sex a-morality would be by far better than our present sex morality.

It is mainly due to the latter that we lose our simplicity in sex life and that we entangle and complicate everything that has to do with it. We usually are so brought up that both sexes are for a long time very distant from each other, so that a legitimate but exaggerated and unsound curiosity is formed on both sides. This curiosity becomes transformed into a constant, abnormal irritation, which, at the slightest occasion, at the least contact, flares up into a frightful fire.

Sex is officially non-existent in the education of most children. Nor are there such things as sex organs; they do not figure in school books, at any rate, not in the elementary books on physiology.

Children's Questions

How do most people learn, after all, what they do know about sex life? Does nature teach us, when the time comes, when we are ripe to receive the proper knowledge? No, we have a desire to have sexual intercourse much earlier, and this is due to the unnatural circumstances in which we live.

The child's questions begin very early and they are never a sign of depravation, as some foolishly believe. The brighter the child, the sooner will he begin to ask them; the more innocent and honest he is, the franker, the more straightforward his questions and the more unembarrassed his manner when asking them. We ought to understand that the child does not ask anything for the purpose of bringing us into confusion, that his questions are a result of deep thinking, which has arisen in him because it had to arise. He asks a question just as he asks for bread. He is hungry for the answer and he is entitled to it. He is also ripe to get it, as his mind was sufficiently ripe to give birth to the question.

Children are usually interested to know how we

come into the world; but they are mostly dismissed with a lie, or they are punished for asking, or the answer is postponed—for the time "when they'll be big". They are told that children are brought by storks. In France they are found in cabbage heads or—horror!—they come out from their mother's forehead. Some people are so mean and prosaic as to have the doctors and midwives bring them in their bags.

Even the most stupid child is able to observe that some change has occurred in the mother toward the end of her pregnancy. One night, without any explanation, the child is pitilessly separated from her. He is locked into his room. Something unusual happens. Doors are opened and closed. There is an air of mystery about the house. He hears his mother's voice, —yes, it is her voice—in the adjoining room. She is crying very loud. Father orders him to sleep, but he cannot. His eyes are for a long time wide open in the dark. At last he closes them and falls asleep, sobbing heavily. The next morning he is taken into mother's room. She is ill in bed, but nobody tells him why. He is introduced to a tiny, red-faced, wriggling creature that looks like a miniature of a human being, but is much uglier. He is told that this is his little sister or brother. Where did it come from? How did they get it? What connection is there between mother's illness and this baby? What connection between her screams of last night and the baby? Can anyone blame the child for asking himself, for asking us, if he is allowed, all these questions, perhaps not so concretely formulated? Would he not be an idiot

if he should fail to ask about the origin of this miracle?

And the answers, instead of being worthy of the questions, are low, immoral, offending the child's mind, degrading his intelligence, infamous.

If children are being brought by the doctor or the midwife, what right have the parents to the love of their offspring?

But even if the child does believe the fables and lies of the adults, it is generally not for a long time. Fortunately so, as otherwise it would prove that he is the hopeless imbecile which his parents consciously or unconsciously intend to make of him. A postponement of the answer for a later period of his life results only in making his curiosity keener.

He looks for other sources of information, which are usually objectionable from every standpoint. Thus by trying to make him moral we succeed in demoralizing him completely.

Every smile, every handshake, every whisper of the grown-up folks, who do not realize how attentive the child is in this respect, is being stored in his mind and in time interpreted in one way or another. Every imprudent word serves him in his silent search for the truth.

There is one thing that he understands early, in his dim, inarticulate way: that there is something which people hide, about which they do not allow him to ask questions and about which they seem to be ashamed or afraid, just as he is ashamed or afraid when he commits some of his little transgressions, as wetting his bed or breaking a glass. Slowly, gradually,

a new thought rises up in his mind and becomes clearer and clearer, more and more certain: that all those phrases which he cannot comprehend, all those embraces in which he surprises men and women—never people of the same sex—and from which they unwind themselves quickly with some inappropriate excuse, all those allusions which make the adults laugh so heartily, are somehow associated with the idea of guilt, of sinfulness, and that simultaneously they have something to do with the appearance of children into the world.

In time he becomes convinced that in sex matters we have to be on our guard, to shun the truth, to feel shame, as they probably contain something unclean, shameful, dishonorable, immoral and ugly. When he becomes older and adults are a little more free in his presence, he never hears them speak of those secret functions otherwise than in a mocking, railing, insolent manner and only in combination with the notion of depravity. So the adults, while thinking that they protect the child from learning what he craves to learn, are teaching him indirectly all about it, but in a wrong way, as if in a curved mirror, and the result is immorality and ugliness in something that is in reality beautiful and moral.

Besides, when the child begins to feel some uncertain, indistinct, vague necessities, he does not come to his parents for an explanation, because he knows already that they will not answer him, that they are not his friends, but that they are high authorities and masters, who will not deign to condescend and to listen to his private troubles. The pubescent child who has

learned something, albeit in so twisted a manner, about sex, from open conversations with his little friends, will rather come to the latter with his confessions concerning his pains or feelings or new phenomena about his sexual sphere. And the friends will reply what they know in their ignorance and an exchange and comparison of experiences and impressions will take place. What do the parents know about the clandestine life of their children?

The Girl's Plight

The young girl who later must play such an important part in life, who is to be the mother of the next generation, in whose bosom lies the future, is supposed to be kept away from sexual knowledge. Even if she does know all about it, it is her duty to be modest, reserved, to make believe that she knows nothing. And there is no doubt that besides the social and economic causes of prostitution and white slavery, one of its main sources is to be sought in this ignorance or half-ignorance of the girls about sex matters and about the dangers lurking for them in all corners. A large part of the prostitutes owe their sad life to this neglect of the education of the girl. And to the same lack of information and preparation as to what awaits the girl in her adult life, are due a good deal of the sufferings, miseries and distresses of women in their married life. One of the reasons why so many women are frigid, bad wives or nervously ill in married life, and so make themselves and their husbands miserable, is the fact that as girls they have been taught to be too reserved with the male sex.

By the way, in boys who have been restrained too much and who have seen girls from a distance only, the effect is sometimes to make them, either half impotent, less virile as men, or on the contrary too exacting from their wives, because they are incapable of self-inhibition.

When the girl wears yet her short skirt and has still in mind her childish plays, between eleven and fifteen years, there occurs in her a change which is rarely recognized by the inexperienced. It is a transformation of her character, of her intellect, of her way of seeing things and looking at them, of her power of comprehension, of her relation to the surrounding world and to herself. She does not understand herself and she does not know how to understand her close society. A vague dreaming, a longing to something unknown to her begins to reveal itself to her soul. This is the moral part of the unfolding of the human flower. Usually this moral metamorphosis in the wonderful and exquisitely delicate girlish blossom does not have the bad consequences that it could have in the coarse atmosphere in which it is enclosed, because the playful, naive nature of the child which has not yet vanished, weakens and corrects the new impulse and anxiety of the oncoming woman-feelings and mother-feelings. True, this development has not been sudden; true, it commenced in the cradle and it found its expression in one way or another during the first ten or twelve years of the child's life, when it was mingled with all her plays. It is true that the tender and careful motherhood bestowed upon the doll has

been the beginning of her subsequent, natural, rich, real motherhood. But at present, in the years of expansion, in the period of her magnificent sexual awakening, the spiritual changes are quicker than ever before, although not more visible, not more apparent, although they are even more confusing, more intricate, more obscure, more unintelligible, more enigmatic than before.

And now, when the girl stands on the threshold of her womanhood, all sorts of perils are besieging her in our base, sordid, corrupt, civilized world, if she is not being guided with great prudence, tenderness, tact and love over and through the unsafe path. The dangers are infinitely smaller, the problems much easier, if the educators have listened to the little girl from the earliest days of her life, from the time when sex questions first dawned upon her mind and if these have been answered frankly and truthfully.

But if the moral, mental and spiritual part of the female development is frequently unknown or puzzling to the child and to the parents, the physical transformations are so visible, that they cannot pass unobserved. Of course, with the rare parents who understand the rational bringing-up of the child, this bodily change in the girl is not unexpected by her. They have prepared her gradually to her future great role and she is fully aware of her duties. Until the above described critical period, she has learned of all the phenomena that must show themselves in her body. However, such a good education is seldom met with and therefore the significance of the first hair on the

mons veneris, the marvelous budding of the young and proud breasts, as well as the mystery of the menstruation are mostly foreign to the child, or their meaning has been warped and soiled through the false and unclean theories gleaned from ignorant playmates and from the surrounding society plunged in immorality.

If not too late, it is of great importance that a free and open explanation should be given at least now. And for that purpose the best person is the mother or another enlightened, wise woman. Of course, there where no mother, no father, no friend, no teacher has done anything to bring light into the girl's mind, there where the sexual education has been neglected, —an honest, magnanimous, intelligent physician, armed with much tact, may be the teacher. Possibly it would be a good thing that such a custom should be introduced for the benefit of both boys and girls.

As this is rarely done, we should not be astonished or feel revolted when we learn that a large percentage of young girls, sometimes mere children, have lost their virginity during school years or soon after.

What I said above about the partial relation of the ignorance of girls to white slavery as cause and effect could be proved by many circumstances and examples and by confessions of many a prostitute. A few years ago an investigation among some of the traders caught red handed in New York brought some extremely interesting facts which ought to serve as warnings to all parents. The little that could be squeezed out from them, the scant information that was gained from their admissions, was exceedingly

revolting and appalling, although not unknown to those of us who deal with social and sanitary facts. In ten years one of the criminals seduced and misled not less than three thousand girls, mostly elementary and secondary school girls, and sold them to brothel houses.

Can you imagine what this means? Your child, a girl of thirteen or fourteen, who happens to be well developed physically, with somewhat larger breasts than it is usual, with round outlines, with long hair braids, with an attractive, fresh, red and white face, her mind full of vague, half slumbering dreams and desires, is off in the morning to school. She carries her books. Her legs are free up to the knees, unencumbered by skirts. She walks, and her graceful lips sketch a smile and speak to a classmate about a thousand innocent absurdities of their school life or perhaps about the serious questions and secrets of their age. She walks, and sometimes jumps up a little, forgetting that since some time her mother is classifying her among the big girls.

You know she is at school. . . . But it is late and the child did not return yet! You leave your work and go to look for her. It is in vain. Where is she? Where can she be? She has disappeared. And now you recall that during the last weeks she often used to go out in the evening and come home late. Her conduct had become queer. She was more nervous, more excited, more distracted than ever. You had had a few quarrels with her on that account; but what was going on in her soul you did not guess.

From school to brothel, that was her way. And that way passed through motion picture theatres, dance halls, gay restaurants, automobile trips, candies, presents, fine smiles and nice words, all coming from a correctly and stylishly dressed young man, whose behavior was evidently as sweet as honey. The poor young girl mistook this for love, for true love out of the novels and followed the hero with the oiled, shiny, well combed hair, with the white, clean and manicured hands, whose touch awakened in her body some new pleasure and opened a spring of untapped and unknown heavenly sentiments. She felt a necessity to have adventures which should free her from her everyday gray, monotonous life, just as the boy wants to go and fight the Indians.

So she becomes a prostitute. She cannot return home, she has burned all the bridges that connected her with her former society. Her body has been hurled into the Minotaur's mouth, into the entrails of the grotesque giant who swallows children and who to-day is no other than human civilized society.

Undoubtedly the parents have a large share of the guilt involved in this crime, in the loss of their child. What have they done in order to prevent it and to save her? Have they prepared her? Have they told her about sex life and about the ambushes strewn on her way? Did they tell her anything about sexual diseases, prostitution and white slavery? Were they her friends and did they deserve her trust? Did they do everything to make her home agreeable? Did they understand how to watch her and at the same time to leave

her free? Did they not, all through her child age, forbid her all they should have accorded her, and allowed her all they should have prohibited her? Did they ever explain her why they did not permit her something? Did they bring her up rationally?

If not, what right have they to complain?

The Boy's Plight

The boy is perhaps in greater need of a teacher and leader in sexual life than the girl, because he is more exposed to excitements and is, by reason of his sex, less hampered than she. Freedom as such, the largest measure of freedom would not hurt him. But harmful and dangerous for him is his freedom combined with his ignorance. He too should get a natural sex education, increasing by degrees and with his growing years, a preparation which should start at the time when his mind begins to develop, so that there would be no difficulties when his maturity begins. As it is, such a bringing-up being rather the exception, a course —as informal as possible—of serious lessons would undoubtedly have a salutary effect.

The sexual development in the boy is more complicated in its external symptoms than in the girl. The erections, the slight overflowing discharges of the superfluous but natural gland secretions due to conscious or unconscious irritations, and later the pollutions of real seminal fluid and the sexual dreams,— all these inevitable incidents scare the young boy and

suggest to him the thought that he is ill. The indistinct, mysterious craving after the unknown, the involuntary blushing at the contact of a girl, who, although chronologically of the same age as he, is sexually older and more experienced; his awkward and clumsy behavior in the presence of the female sex,—all this disturbs and amazes the boy.

The adolescent who begins to feel himself unhappy through the need of love is like the baby who, surprised at an unexpected and involuntary sneeze, looks around and tries to discover who had done something to him. He does not understand the cause of his trouble.

The quieter, more thoughtful and more poetically inclined boys are being penetrated and conquered in this period by a boundless yearning, by a brooding sadness, by a pessimism without equal, sometimes by a love which embraces the entire humanity, the whole world, all nature.

Many or most of the boys are frequently so excitable that to the experienced observer they seem to be loaded with powder ready to explode at any moment through a spark of fire. And in a certain sense this is really the case. They believe to be in love with every girl who excites them and they feel themselves extremely unhappy if they cannot attain their aim, to possess her. Here and there one falls in love with some heroine of a novel or of a play. Others act in a seemingly aimless manner.

In all these difficulties the boy finds himself mostly alone, a solitary sufferer, helpless, without an older and more intelligent friend, a real friend, to whom he

should be able to confide and who should be his illuminating star, his shining beacon. Around him he sees only: his unfriendly parents of whom he has been accustomed, through his upbringing, to be afraid or ashamed; the older, cynical and often shameless comrades, who excite him still more and drive him to the prostitute; the advertisements of the quack doctors who scare him and throw him into despair; and a world of women, women everywhere, who inflame him constantly and wait, many with their gonorrhoea and syphilis, for his young, trembling, innocent undeveloped body. And among them winks, nods, beckons, calls the professional prostitute!

He is seventeen years old,—alas, sometimes sixteen or even younger! His playmates talk only of women. They are all excited. Their fancy, being constantly irritated, becomes easily aflame, and brings before them those pictures which they wish to see. Their jokes are full of the female body. Most of them have "experience". They are proud to have had their share of venereal diseases and they deride the "baby", the only boy among them who knows yet very little about these matters. There are a few others who are just as much novices as he is, but they are reluctant to avow it and they join in the chorus of ridicule aimed at the only confessedly inexperienced.

He reads the lying booklets and newspaper advertisements, which are being spread profusely in order to advertise some criminal swindlers who unfortunately as a rule practise lawfully and are licensed physicians. A large part of the press help them and are their part-

ners by being well paid for their insertions. The medical profession never fights them seriously, probably because it feels what sinister light a true investigation of their affairs would reflect upon it; the leaders of the profession are aware of the fact that even many so-called decent physicians, who do not advertise in the papers, are in this respect almost as rapacious as the others. Here and there an arrest has been made, but nothing radical has ever been done and the trade of these sharks continues to be thriving and prosperous. The fakers "who specialize in venereal troubles" do all in their power to terrorize and lure boys and men to their offices, where, with assistants, with "electric machines", with bottles of water variously colored, they fleece their clients and, what is worse, put into their minds the terrible germ of the belief that whatever they suffer from is a dangerous disease, a belief of which few are able to get rid to the end of their lives.

He is lured into so-called "anatomical" exhibitions belonging to quacks, where the worst and most exceptional venereal conditions are illustrated in colored pictures and in wax reliefs, and where he is made to believe that his normal symptoms of natural development are signs of frightful diseases.

In the quack "literature" the boy finds his few innocent, almost childish secrets, his normal, physiological feelings around the genitals, lavishly described and to every one of his "symptoms" great and exaggerated importance is given. The booklets are written by a clever and shrewd scribe in the service of the

charlatan. In them the boy finds arguments that persuade him that he is a sinful creature with grave moral and physical offenses against his conscience. The very common acne, backache, headache, etc., are mentioned there as sure signs of a disease whose cause is pollution or masturbation and whose prognosis is insanity; the remedy, of course, is a treatment by Doctor So-And-So whose address is on every paragraph of the booklet. The boy recognizes himself in its pages and is terribly frightened, as these are words written by a doctor, and surely a doctor knows!

On the other hand all the boys assure him that the only way to get cured of all his ailments "is to go to see a woman". Besides, they say, he cannot afford to be a baby; "he must become a man".

All these and other circumstances drive the young boy, sometimes yet a child, into the arms of some woman, but mostly into the hell of prostitution, into the public cloacal sewer, which poisons and infects the lives of thousands of men, which pollutes their minds and their bodies.

Physicians treat daily hundreds of cases of gonorrhoea in children of fifteen, sixteen and seventeen and hear their confessions, but nobody can treat the mental sore left in the boy who loses his virginity in the embrace of a prostitute.

All this may be unpleasant reading, but it is essential that all the facts be known to parents, to educators, to the public, so that everyone who feels a responsibility, should react. I cannot and will not spare them some of the details. It is important that they feel at

least a part of the pains which thinking physicians have felt since so long. Cleaning dirt is a clean work.

The boy goes. . . No real desire, no necessity leads him there. He thinks it his duty to go. He is bewildered. His head burns, his heart palpitates, he shivers, he has lost all control of himself, he does not know what he is doing. The experienced and skilled prostitute looks at him scornfully. He does not hear her words, he does not understand clearly what he has to do. He blushes, he is ashamed and embarrassed. His throat is dry and his mouth bitter. She helps him. He feels a horrible repugnance and a desire to vomit. He would like to cry, to cry in his mother's lap. But —"he must be a man". And he sees two flabby, hanging breasts, a wrinkled stomach, red and blue ribbons, a mouth full of yellow, cynically laughing, teeth, and some more wrinkles, wrinkles everywhere. He feels the odor of a nauseous perfume. The whole picture, all the colors become mixed together with lightning swiftness, and suddenly, for one brief moment, appears another image: the red and fresh cheeks of the young girl who lives next door to his house. He passes his hand over his forehead and wipes away the terrible contrast. He perspires.

The prostitute says something about "green", "inexperienced", and consoles him. He is entirely unable.

He feels tired, weak, broken. He lies stupidly on the bed, like a felled beast. And when at last he must pay, his hands tremble and everything around him dances and flickers.

He leaves the place with a feeling of the deepest

disgust. He flees, and runs along the streets, not knowing where, like a drunkard.

He promises himself never to go again. But he does not keep his promise.

This was the passage, the transition to a life full of filth.

Masturbation

Sexual life begins as soon as we are born. It remains in the subconscience until it is provoked, until it is called out into clear conscience by external influences, during childhood, sometimes at a very early age.

Neglect to clean sufficiently the genital region, touching too frequently and unnecessarily the child's body, superfluous caressing, fondling, stroking, kissing the child, letting the child share the parent's or other adult's bed at night, putting several children to sleep in one bed, lack of supervision of the child's play and playmates,—all these and other mistakes are the causes of a too early sexual development and of unhealthful sexual habits.

During childhood, during the important years of the building up of the character, it is best for the parents not to consider anybody as reliable, not to trust the child to anybody, without oversight. Governesses, the very persons who are supposed to take care of and educate the child, are often the first ones who directly and indirectly acquaint him with

sexual practices which he would otherwise, if ever, have acquired but much later. We should not rely on the child's brothers and sisters during their puberty or even after maturity. The same may be said about uncles and aunts; also about servants.

Masturbation is one of the first sexual habits acquired by the child. It is a sexual satisfaction provoked by handling the genitals. Sometimes it begins in babyhood, naturally in a very incomplete form, for instance through a friction of the legs against each other. It is quite common among school children, the school having a very bad effect in this respect. Before the age of ten it is more practiced by girls, later more by boys. Of course, it is altogether more frequent among boys and girls approaching puberty and later. It is not a disease, as the quacks try to persuade the ignoramuses in order to make believe that a treatment is needed and so to extort heavy fees. No honest physician will claim to "cure" it, although he might be able to help the individual discard the habit by giving him a few general advices.

It is very probable that almost all men and women have practiced masturbation some time during their lives. Like any other habit, it may be indulged in so much that it becomes temporarily—rarely permanently—harmful. It is difficult to write about the effects of masturbation in a convincing manner, so as to convey to the reader the real truth, which is somewhere between the extreme theories that have become popular; here is how I would put it: Masturbation is not dangerous, it is usually harmless, but this does not

mean that its practice is hereby recommended; sometimes it does have bad results, but this should not be misunderstood: one must not be alarmed at every case of masturbation and so *suffer more from the consequences of the fear* than from the habit itself. However, all this applies to men and women, and boys and girls after thirteen or fifteen years of age. Among very young children, say between six and ten, especially when passionately and very frequently practiced, it is very harmful, sometimes fatal. In extreme cases it disturbs their appetite, their digestion, their sleep; they are less cheerful than other children; they do not play, they hide in dark corners and they are morose, gloomy, sullen, silent. Sometimes masturbation in children is a result of phimosis, inflammation of the vulva or vagina, an irritating condition of the urine, of the stool or of the skin, or it is due to constipation or to improper diet, or to all these causes combined, to which may be added the mental irritation due to wrong upbringing.

As this is not a treatise on sex life, I shall limit myself here by giving just a few hints concerning the treatment of masturbation in children.

Prevention is paramount. The region of and around the baby's genitals should be kept perfectly clean and dry. Any redness or itching of the skin in those parts should be promptly and properly treated, as it may result in masturbation if neglected. It is easy to understand that by scratching or touching too often the organs the baby or the older child discovers a pleasure of which he never dreamed before and that

by repetition he will fall into the masturbation habit. The food should be simple, spiceless, mild; overnursing or overfeeding should be avoided. The bowels should be in order and, if worms are noticed in the stools, the child should immediately be treated for them, as they cause itching.

The child should be occupied with toys and later with games and child-work. He should always be under distant, but careful supervision. Let him have liberty, but you should always be well posted as to what he is doing. Do not touch his body more than it is absolutely necessary. All children should empty their bladders before going to bed, they should always sleep alone, in a room without perfumes, with plenty of fresh, cool air. The bed should not be too softly made. Avoid feathers. The children should not tarry in bed after they awake. They should not hear from their parents dubious, ambiguous or equivocal words or jokes about sex, they should not see love scenes or anything that may evoke in them artificially a greater curiosity than it is natural and normal for them. But the parents should not be too prude and austere either and should not try to conceal their love to each other entirely; nor should they take extreme pains to hide their own body or the child's body unnecessarily, as this would also arouse his suspicion and the effect would be bad. It is advisable that the mother and the father have separate beds. And last, but not least, answer the child's questions truthfully and simply, but never more than he desires to know.

If you find that the children masturbate or play

with their genitals, dress them so that they should not be able to touch them. If they are old enough to understand you, tell them that the habit is harmful, that they may become ill from it, etc. This helps very much, particularly if the parents have not lost their children's confidence and if the latter know that their parents do not lie to them. Take care that the children should not postpone defecation and urination more than it is indispensable. If necessary, the children should be awakened in the night to empty their bladder. Daily lukewarm baths with short, cold sprays over the whole body, will have a calming effect upon the excited nervous system.

Sometimes the masturbating child must be entirely removed from the environment in which he lives and in which he meets those who taught him the habit.

At the proper age, which may vary according to the circumstances in which they have lived and to their individual temperaments, girls should be ex-explained about menstruation and about the sex functions. In the same way, boys should learn about the innocuousness of erections and pollutions (if not more frequent than about once in two weeks or so), etc. Both boys and girls should also hear about the criminal maniacs of both sexes who entice children for their perverse passions, but they should not be made to believe that anyone who talks to them may harm them.

Older children of both sexes should be taught all about the abnormal outgrowths of sex life, as venereal diseases, prostitution with its concomitant, the white slavery commerce, etc., and should be informed that

there is no need that immature individuals have intercourse; that on the contrary, it is often harmful to them; that usually sex maturity does not occur until about the age of 18 in girls and 20 in boys and that, while abstinence for a too long time may have bad effects, it is not noxious for a few years in very young men and women. Girls should be instructed that even when they are quite young, say fourteen or fifteen, if they are somewhat developed and menstruate, they may become pregnant through the external contact of the sex organs only.

In addition to sex enlightenment the adolescent needs a strong dose of will power. Throughout all their childhood the importance of the will power should be strongly impressed on both the boy and the girl. They should learn to respect those who can master themselves as being really strong people, true heroes, who deserve to be honored. This will help the growing and ripening youths to withstand the terrible attacks on their minds and hearts coming from all sides, particularly in our civilized countries.

Opposition to Sex Education

In the last years many people have begun to realize that ignorance in sex matters is the cause of many crimes, of many cases of disease, of a wretched private life in all classes of society, and that the guilt falls largely on our prevailing harmful and unclean "morality". A progressive minority in all countries understand now the importance and necessity of sexual education. Books, magazines, articles in the press treating the sex question have appeared and appear continually. Lectures and talks on sex are being delivered. But all this is only a small, and in certain regions an infinitesimal portion, of the work which is yet to be done. The conservatives protest and fight against it; they hinder as much as they can, they put as many obstacles in the way as possible. They have more or less authorized censors, who, under the pretext of being the guardians of our "morals", interfere with the diffusion of knowledge and truth. But even many liberally and radically minded people, full of superstitions and of the false precepts acquired in their own childhood, and still carrying the spiritual

yoke of the dark past, are against sexual enlightenment.

One of the contentions of the opponents to sexual education is that its advocates are overstating the importance of the sex problems. The answer to this objection is that, whether we like it or not, sex is one of the main factors which decide our fate, which influence us in every moment, which give a sense to our existence. How often is sex even a more important agent than nutrition! Not to speak of the fact that we are meant by nature, whose instruments we are, to multiply our species, there is rarely a person who has no sexual interests, whose mind is not busy a large part, nay, the largest part, of his or her life, with sex thoughts. Look around! You pronounce the words "father", "mother", — you talk sex. You recall the past generations. You think of the future generations. Sex! Your nation — sex! Your wife, your children—sex! Try to speak for some time about anything unrelated to sex or in which sex should not be mentioned directly or indirectly, and you will see that this is impossible. Our literature, our theatre, our art is pervaded with sex. All the poets of all times have sung or have told us about some phases of sex life, these occupying sometimes the totality of their productions. What strikes us mainly in plants, in animals, is their sex life. Why then not be frank about it?

Sex is the mainspring in our lives, the final motive of all our actions. Nevertheless, it is yet far from being thoroughly known and understood. Not only do

the majority of men ignore almost everything of our sex function, but even many of those whose duty it is to know, are but superficially informed. Only a few specialists, sexologists, are prepared to talk with as much knowledge as science and their own experience permits. The largest number of physicians are nearly totally blind in the sex question, and, as they are not engaged in this line of work, they often believe that we sexologists are extravagant in our claims.

No, the importance and urgency of the sex problems are not overestimated; they are underrated.

Some of the reasons for the opposition to sex teaching are purely personal. With many it is because they themselves lack the true sex education. With others it is because they are morbidly passionate, filled with exaggerated, unnatural needs, so that they cannot read or hear in quietude the truth about sex life, without being bewildered and abnormally excited. Such talks or writings upset their equilibrium. They imagine others as corrupt as they are and they fear that a simple, true explanation of sex matters will have the same effect on others as it has on them. Still other people are adversaries of sex education because they are sexually unnaturally cold or impotent, or perverted or otherwise abnormal individuals, so that they, judging the world from their own angle, cannot see the utility of such instruction.

On the other hand, there are those who have misunderstood the meaning of the word "free love", who have forgotten that it must be real love first of all, who use this expression as a cloak for all promiscuous

experiments and all sorts of depraved habits and make it a theme for all kinds of ridiculous and humorous subjects. Such people, parading as advocates of sex teaching, are often mistaken for educators. They should be kept away from children upon whom they may have a sinister and nefarious influence. They should be distinguished from the really progressive men and women, who believe in the beauty and morality of all true love and in the necessity of sex instruction, without having anything to hide under this belief,—the distinction to be made, not from their words only, but from their conduct as well.

Notwithstanding all these calumnies and slanders against the idea of sex enlightenment and its advocates, in spite of all these difficulties from so many sides, the work is progressing daily and is helping to clean our lives more and more.

Conversations on Sex

It is not necessary to describe an exact method of sex education for children, because they, if we take heed of their questions, always help and guide their parents. Each age, each phase of childhood brings its own questions, which, if properly answered, will be fully satisfactory for a long time, sometimes for years.

At first, the child is interested to learn how babies come into the world. Grown-up folk, because they know all the a b c (but not more) of sex, fear that as soon as he finds this out, the child will immediately investigate further and will desire to hear all the details of the sexual act itself. But we should not judge the child by ourselves. The knowledge that babies grow in their mothers' bodies and come out from there when ripe and fully alive, is itself so romantic and marvelous a story, so gratifying for a child's curiosity, that it will fill his mind for some time and will leave him perfectly content for a still longer time. Until much later, he will not ask anything concerning the father, because, spontaneously, unprovoked, no suspicion can arise in his simple mind as to the father's role in procreation.

Of course, the father is there, but so is the child himself, so is sometimes the aunt and the grand'pa, etc. Just as it would never occur to him to ask for the reason of the existence of the trees, the hills and the city, so he will not be bothered by the presence of the father in the household,—until he has a valid reason for it, which occurs quite late.

The conversations given below, between a mother and her little daughter, are typical or rather schematic examples, and may, of course, be modified according to the children's questions, to their intelligence, to their previous preparation and to other circumstances. Their purpose is just to show the uninitiated parents what kinds of talks are possible.

It should be well understood that such conversations are in reality not as brief as they are printed in this book and do not occur in the succession adopted here. Every one of them represents a condensation of a longer talk or of many talks between the parent and a child of a given age. The first one may be placed before or after the fifth year; the last one or a few similar ones perhaps after the twelfth year, this varying according to the mental condition and previous opportunities of the child.

Nor will the conversations be limited, finished and concluded with the last dialogue here given. They will have to go further and within the next months or years, as the case may be, the child will learn still more.

If a normal child, after having reached a reasonable age, has never asked any questions about sex life, some-

thing is wrong. Either his upbringing has been faulty and therefore he is afraid of his parents, or he has found some secret sources of information, or he is not normally bright. In such cases it may become needful to do one of the following two things: to put the child in such situations that questions will necessarily arise (see animals giving birth to their little ones, attracting the child's attention to the neighbor's newly born baby, observations of the relations between sexes in a poultry yard, etc.), or, if this is unavailable or unsuccessful, to provoke such conversations as may fit the child. Naturally, it would be unwise to start abruptly, without any relation to things which have occurred somewhere in the child's surroundings, or to ideas or facts about which the child has read or heard. At such occasions the children should be encouraged to talk freely and frankly and to ask all they wish to learn.

Dialogues Between a Wise Mother and Her Daughter

1

—Mother, how did I come to you?

—What do you mean?

—I mean. . . Where did you get me?

—Oh, I understand! . . . Why, I gave birth to you when you were a baby. You are born from me.

—What means born?

—You came out of me.

—Of your body?

—Yes.

—Where did I lie in your body?

—In the abdomen, here.

—Do all the children come out of big people?

—All the babies come out of their mothers.

—And the mothers?

—The mothers, when they are little, when they are born, come out of their mothers.

—And the fathers?

—The fathers too come out of their mothers.

2

—Mother, why must the babies lie in their mothers' bodies?

—They must stay there in order to grow. They grow little by little, until they become real babies and until they are so large that they cannot stay inside any longer.

—And if they come out before?

—If they happen to come out before being ripe, they cannot live, they die soon. The babies are like fruits. Do you remember the apple tree near our house when we were in the country?

—Yes, I do.

—Do you remember when the apples were small, very small? They were hanging on the tree and the sun warmed them up, the tree nourished them from inside, sending into them through fine tubes the nourishment which it took from the earth by its rootlets and roots and from the air by means of the leaves. Each little apple grew and grew, from green it became reddish and finally completely red and very large. The baby in the mother's body grows in the same way. It gets heat and nourishment from the mother's blood.

—Mother, I love you!

3

—Mother, how do babies come out of the mother's stomach?

—They come out through an opening which all the women have between their thighs and when that happens the mothers suffer great pains.

—Pains?

—Yes, terrible ones. . . But, why do you cry?

—You had awful pains on account of me. Mother, I love you so much!

4

—Mother, don't you think that Helen, Mildred and Amy are liars?

—Why do you ask me?

—I told them how babies grow in their mothers' bodies and how they are born, but Helen said it was not true. Her mother says the stork brings them. And Mildred laughed at me, because she thinks the doctor brings them in his satchel. She says she herself saw the doctor come with a leather bag when she got her baby brother. And Amy was told by her big sister that they get the babies in cabbage heads.

—All this is untrue, but it is not their fault, my child. They were told lies.

—Why?

—Because the mothers and the other grown-up people were afraid to tell them the truth.

—Why, mother?

—Because they are foolish. They were afraid that the children would become bad if they knew the truth.

5

—Mother, I know why Mildred's mother stayed in bed when Mildred got her baby brother.

—Why?

—Because he came out of his mother's body and his mother suffered pains.

—Yes, dear.

—And I understand why Mildred's mother had a big stomach before the baby was born.

—Why?

—Because the baby was inside and growing.

—Yes, my child.

6

—Mother, why does Mildred's mother not tell Mildred the truth how she got the baby?

—Because she is a fool. But it is not her fault either; they taught her that she must not tell.

—Who taught her so?

—Her mother.

—And who taught that her mother?

—Her mother's mother . . . and so forth. Almost all mothers and fathers think that when a woman gets a baby they must be ashamed of it.

—Mildred's mother is ashamed? . . Ha, ha, ha!

-Why do you laugh, dear?

—Because she is ashamed. It is so nice to have a baby and to be a mother!

7

—Mother, how do the little kittens grow?

—They grow in their mother's belly,—you know, the big cat. Did you not notice how our cat's belly became larger lately? She will soon give birth to baby kittens. The calf grows in the same way in his mother's, the cow's, belly; the sheep bear their lambs, the mother-dogs their puppies, and so on.

—And the cat too will have pains when she will get the kittens?

—Yes, my child, but not so much as a woman.

8

—Mother, she got them!

—Who? What?

—The cat got the kittens in the cellar.

—Did you see them?

—Yes, they are so tiny! Why did she get four at a time?

—That is the way the cats do. Not all animals are alike. The cow has usually one baby at a time; the woman also. But it often happens that a woman should get two babies together.

—Mother, give me a piece of bread for the kittens.

—No, my child, they do not need your bread and they cannot eat it. Their mother, the cat, will give them milk from her breasts until they'll be bigger.

—That is just like Mildred's mother, who is nursing her baby!

—Of course. And I too nursed you from my breasts when you were a baby.

—Mother, I love you so much!

9

—Mother, do all animals come from their mothers' bodies?

—All; but not in the same way. Many animals don't bear them until the end. They bear the eggs only, to which they give birth, and afterwards they warm them under their bodies, sitting in a nest. The chicken lays eggs and when she has a number of them, she sits over them for many days. She broods them so

long under her feathers until the little chicks in the eggs hatch, that is, become ripe and are able to break the eggs from inside. Then they go out. All the birds do so.

—Oh, how nice!

—There are still other animals coming from eggs. But not all are hatched out by their mothers. Many are warmed up simply by the sun.

—But the chickens have no breasts and no milk.

—No, dear, they teach their little chicks to eat small grains and other things. The animals giving birth to babies, nurse them. Those which lay eggs, don't nurse their babies.

—Mother, from now on I shall watch all the animals, as you told me to do. It feels so good to know all about them!

10

—Mother, you told me once that the apples were the babies of the apple tree. Do the apples have a mother only?

—No, dear, in the tree there is the father and the mother together.

—On one tree?

—Yes, on one tree. You don't believe it? I'll show you when we'll be in the country. Do you think that all living creatures are alike? Don't you see, for instance, that the trees cannot leave their places, while we, and other animals, can walk, fly or swim? But there are trees and other plants in which the mother

and the father, that is the female and the male parts, are not together, not on the same plant, not on the same tree.

—How does the little apple begin to grow?

—Look here. This is a picture of a flower of an apple tree. In the spring, when it is blossoming time for the apple tree, we'll go out in the country for a Sunday, and I'll show you real flowers. But now we have to be satisfied with this picture. Those are the male parts and this is the female part. From the male part comes out this fine yellow powder or dust and enters into the female part. This dust is composed of very small grains and not all of them go into the female part. When such grains get in, there starts in the female part a great change, a great work, which is the first beginning of the growth of the baby.

—Of which baby?

—Of the little apple.

—Oh, I understand. And in that place the big apple grows up?

—Yes, dear.

—And these little fathers and mothers go back inside the tree?

—No, the female part or some portion of it bears the baby, the apple, until the apple becomes ripe. The male part and all that part of the flower which is not used for the formation of the fruit, shrivels and falls from the tree, and in the following spring new flowers grow.

—Oh, that is why I see the flowers fall down in

the spring! It is so beautiful! Sometimes it is like snow on the ground.

—Yes, you saw that on our walks. Many blossoms fall down before they have had a chance to produce fruits.

—But, mother, I never knew before why flowers were needed. I thought they were there just for beauty's sake.

—There is a reason for everything, my child.

11

—You once told me that all the women have an opening for the babies. Do you have one?

—Yes, dear, all the women and all the girls have it and it leads to parts that we call the female organs and which make them mothers. But in little girls those organs are not entirely developed, that is, they are not fully grown, and they cannot be mothers.

—Where are those organs?

—Deep inside, in the body; but the entrance is outside.

—Oh, I know, the entrance is where the babies come out when they are born.

—Yes, my dear.

—You told me that the baby grows in the mother's body. In which part of the body are the female organs?

—In the lower part of the abdomen.

—But where are the male organs in the fathers?

—Between their thighs.

—Oh, now I understand; I have seen them in baby boys.

—Do the animals have the male and the female organs on separate bodies?

—In most animals the fathers are different from the mothers, just like in man. For instance, there is a male cat and a female cat; the rooster is a father and the hen is a mother.

—And the eggs are the babies?

—They are unripe babies.

—Yes, I know that their mother, the hen, warms the eggs to make them be real babies, chicks.

—Very well, my child.

—But in flowers the male and the female part are near each other, and it is easy for the yellow dust to enter the female part. How can it be with the hen?

—You are wrong, my child. It is not as easy as that in all the flowers. In some plants the female part, although on the same individual plant, is distant from the male part, while in other plants they are situated in different plants which grow far from each other in various places of the field or forest. One tree may bear female flowers only and another tree male flowers only.

—How do they meet?

—How? The bees and other insects and the wind help them. They carry the yellow dust to some of the female flowers; I'll explain you more about this later and we'll look it up in the book. . . But you asked me how the male and the female parts of the rooster and the hen meet.

—Yes, that is what I want to know.

—The rooster has, instead of a yellow dust, a substance which comes out from his male organs which are on the hind part of his body between his legs. This substance contains the male germs which, when united with the female ones of the hen, form the beginnings of the egg, that is, of the future baby. The male matter enters the female organs, whose opening lies on the hind part of the hen's body, between her legs.

—But how does this substance come from the rooster to the hen?

—Do you remember, when we were in the country, you saw the rooster jump on the hen, and you always used to chase him off?

—Oh, I see! . . . That's what it was? I thought he was biting her.

—No, dear, while their male and female parts touched each other, the rooster's organ entered the hen's opening and left inside that substance about which I told you before; at the same time the rooster and the hen embraced each other in their way. It makes them great pleasure. It is the same with the male and female cat, with the male and female dog, and so on.

—This is wonderful! . . . Does this happen with men and women too?

—Yes, dear, when they are big enough to be fathers and mothers.

FIFTH PART

Health and the Child

Introductory Remarks.—To do justice to the subject "health and the child", a popular book on the physical care of children from the point of view and in the light of rational bringing-up, would be necessary, a work which I may take up some day.

Here I do not intend to go into many details and to be complete. I merely wish to say a few words concerning those items of child hygiene which are more closely connected with the mental and moral problems of the child's upbringing.

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the child's physical and moral bringing-up and we are not always certain where one begins and the other ends. Often coercion to eat, for instance, is not used for the purpose to induce the child to get more nourishment, that is for his bodily benefit, but it is just one of the many incidents in the method of employing force in dealing with the child as a means to discipline him morally.

Health questions are yet in the debatable stage and will be so for a long time yet. Even in some of the questions of principle the greatest masters are far

from reaching an agreement. The science of hygiene is in the process of formation and many a "truth" of yesterday—indeed only of thirty, twenty and ten years ago—is denied to-day. And nevertheless most parents, laymen, claim to be so cock-sure about their hygienic theories and rules as to impose them tyrannically on their offspring. It never occurs to them to take in consideration some of the desires, the so-called whims and caprices of the child, which may be based on sound, if obscure, instinctive needs; they are never aware of the fact that he is closer to nature than the adult. In this interference with the child's tastes and preferences reigns the same incorrect principle as all along the line,—that the parents know it all, that they are infallible.

The people, as a rule, are extremely obedient to the healing professions; therefore, they cling stubbornly to the advices of the latter. Of course, when medical science advances, the public will advance too, but only after it will be able to discard the teachings previously gotten and now fallen in disgrace or desuetude. As a whole, the lay public (and the majority of the rank and file, that is, of the mediocre part, of the medical profession) of to-day follows tenaciously the principal tenets, including the superstitions, of hygiene, of the teachers of yesterday. To-morrow's public will adopt to-day's doctrines. Of course, some of the beliefs, some of the knowledge inherited from previous generations —recent and long past—are mixed with the newly accepted dogmas. When we realize this state of affairs, we may ask ourselves, What right have the adults to

dictate to their children any order or line of conduct in matters pertaining to health?

Physiologically and pathologically, children vary sufficiently from the adults to warrant the existence of a special child hygiene and a specialty of children's diseases. But intrinsically and as a matter of principle they are much the same as the adults. After the age of infancy and as soon as all his teeth have made their appearance, the child may eat more or less the same kinds of foods as the adult, although he must and does eat comparatively more of them to allow for his growth. His errors in diet will be punished by nature along the same general lines as in the grown-up folk.

Although the child is regarded as frail, he is by nature relatively more resistant than his seniors, and than he himself will be in the future. Logically, he should gain in vitality and resistance as he advances in life; but society, the family and our so-called care deprive him in the majority of the cases, gradually, of some of his precious power to withstand disease. In the course of time, he loses a good deal of the hygienic qualities and forces with which he is usually endowed in the first four or five years of his life, and much of this loss is due to the physical and mental conditions in which he is forced to live.

We should think that physicians ought to be the people's best models in health matters and that one ought to be safe in copying and imitating them. But it is well known that the doctor dies at about the same average age as other persons of his social rank, that the causes of his death point to the same errors against

health which are committed by all uneducated and neglectful sinners; he suffers from the same defects and wrong habits as everybody else. Therefore his children are hygienically not better up than their companions who originate from mere laymen.

There is no more pitiful sight than a young and newly married couple after the birth of their first child. The mother had been either a working girl or one of those girls who are taught all sorts of tricks which are useful for one purpose only, to catch a husband. Such a mother has no idea as to what a baby is. The father is not even supposed to know. He does not dare to touch the darn thing with his clumsy, large, rough, horny hands, for fear he might crush it. The neighbors and the aunts, the grandmothers and other women-folk who abound in volunteer advices, are all ridiculously misinformed and contradict themselves constantly,—even the one who professes to know a whole lot because she has had fifteen children, although she never mentions how many have died and how many hundreds of times they have been ill through her fault or ignorance.

How well would it be now, how good would the young mother feel, if she had studied with the same assiduity all about the handling and care of a baby as she did for the purpose of becoming proficient in dancing!

Yes, a school for future mothers is at least as valuable as a dancing school. Schools in which young girls should be taught *health conservation in babies*, should function everywhere and should impart those

few simple ideas that are contained in child hygiene and only those which are uncontested; such schools should encourage the pupils to think health, also to think and reason independently and never to ignore the child's desires. Such schools should help the students to unlearn almost all they have gathered from their mothers, neighbors, and from most of the books and magazines.

A number of books on the care of the child are circulating among the people. Some of them are written by famous specialists and are very good in some respects. But they all suffer from the common defect to disregard almost entirely the child's wishes and to be founded on the old despotical methods of upbringing.

The city dispensary or "milk station" where mothers are invited to bring their babies and get the necessary information is respected by mothers in virtue of the fact that it is supposed to be authoritative. But what is an institution of the health department? One in which ordinary, average physicians and nurses are employed. Why should it be so astonishing, then, that the women often get there advices which are contrary to the welfare of their babies, as it has been seen many times, and that some of the mothers feel themselves superior in knowledge to most of these doctors and nurses?

If a child seems lacking in brightness, try to find out whether his eyesight and hearing are normal, and see to it that he should live for some time in good physical conditions, before you consider him mentally abnormal or deficient.

Birth Control.—Proper care of babies and children is well nigh impossible in a worker's family with too many children. Therefore, one of the first duties of most of the parents toward their offspring is to limit their number. Public health authorities and city and central government agencies, if they really mean to improve the people's health, should distribute freely anticonceptional means, should teach their use and should encourage the invention of the best preventive methods.

Influences During Pregnancy.—As a general rule it is true that if the mother suffers physically and mentally during her pregnancy, the baby may—not must!—be abnormally weak and below the average in many respects. But, without going into further discussions, I may say that it is wrong to conclude from this, as some do, that the mother is able to confer wonderful talents and qualities to the future child, if, during pregnancy, she endeavors to see and hear beautiful things, as, for instance, charming music. This superstition is just as untrue as the belief that the sight of a mouse will cause the baby to have a gray mark and the fright due to a fire will give him a red sign. Of course, it is also erroneous and silly to think, as many do, that the baby will certainly be an idiot because the mother happened to see an idiotic child some time after conception.

Remnants of Savagery.—To hang on rings on the baby's ears, often perforating the ear lobes, is not only

a cruel operation, but it constitutes a violation of the child's future will and an abuse of her present helplessness.

Some civilized parents still ornate their child with all sorts of amulets which are supposed to protect him from illness. This has a bad effect on the chlid's mind and body, as he learns to rely for his health on miracles and not on rational preventive measures.

Circumcision.—This is a simple, usually harmless operation by which the foreskin of the penis is partly or totally removed. It is necessary in cases of a high degree of phimosis, a condition of narrowness of the prepuce, which may be a consequence of some diseases in adult men, but which, when present in the baby, is congenital. If the phimosis is slight, it is most easy to make it innoxious by a few daily, gradual, gentle, painless dilatations. It is true that circumcision prevents the accumulation of secretion and dirt around the extremity of the viril organ, although the same result may be attained by simply keeping the foreskin clean and bathing it on both external and internal sides as often as any other part of the body, which requires no particular effort. But many people, and among them physicians, who, of course, have a professional interest in the matter, claim for circumcision more than this, namely that it is a means to prevent venereal contagion or to diminish its possibility. This is totally untrue. Since the Jews, whose males are practically all circumcised, live under the same marital conditions as other races, as they mostly do in the

United States, they are just as much a prey to venereal diseases as other persons. Of course, for the Hebrews and for most of the other peoples who circumcise their boys, this practice has a religious significance, notwithstanding the quasi-scientific or false hygienic excuses of many half emancipated Jews who cannot get rid of their ancient fanaticism and who wish to give it a modern appearance. That circumcision, which is a covenant between the people of the bible and its god, must be regarded as a sacrificial and symbolic rite dating from very great antiquity, is incontestable. Without going into details, I may say here that it still exists among many backward tribes—in some it is practiced on both sexes—and it always represents a sacrifice to a divinity and often, if done at the proper age, an introduction into mature life or a sanctification of the reproductive power.

Kissing.—One of the most revolting customs is the forcible kissing of children. It is one of those abuses which almost any adult considers as his right and which he arrogates to himself presumptuously, without the least regard of the youngsters' feelings, nay, even in face of their most strenuous objections. Promiscuous kissing is not only a moral misuse; it is also one of the surest means to propagate disease. While it is wrong to overrate the dangers of disease contagion, it is certainly a mistake to underestimate its possibilities, especially in connection with the mouth and nose, which are the main entrances and outlets of infection.

Parents should protect their children against kissing and should teach them to protect themselves

Vaccination.—While I do not agree with the alarming cries spread by the anti-vaccinationists about vaccination, while I hold it to be harmless in the majority —by no means in all—of the cases, I am convinced that it is not needed. The argument that small-pox had made frightful ravages before vaccination was known, yet is comparatively uncommon now, is not a proof for me that vaccination is indispensable. Any impartial, dispassionate and unbiased student will explain this easily after he will have found out the difference between the sanitary and general living conditions before and after the era of vaccination; he will not recur to vaccination as an explanation of the improvement, because he will understand that it happened to coincide with the general trend of progressive movements in all walks of life. He will take in consideration the fact that bad epidemics of other diseases which have decimated humanity in the past have all but disappeared from civilized countries, although no vaccination has been used in the fight against them. At the same time he will know that the number of deaths really due to smallpox in former centuries has been greatly exaggerated.

It is clear that if vaccinations and comparatively frequent re-vaccinations are necessary preventives of small-pox, as their advocates claim, the same must hold true with regard to a number of other diseases, and we should be continually vaccinated and re-vaccinated or similarly treated as a prevention against many other diseases,—which is absurd, not to speak of the fact that such views interfere with the application of

the principles of real prevention and of the true rules of cleanliness and health, which, if prophylactic vaccination is correct, become senseless.

Drugs.—How often does it happen that a child struggles with all the strength at his disposal against the introduction of a medicine by his mother into his alimentary tract! We may say without fear of erring that in at least ninety-nine out of a hundred such cases the child is instinctively right, and the parents, who think they are saving him, are wrong. It is impossible to estimate how many times the zeal of such well-meaning parents has been the cause of the death of their beloved ones, but there is no doubt that this has occurred in very many instances,—and in making this statement I have in mind not only the self-dispensed drugs, but the internal medicaments prescribed by physicians as well. And such deaths have been caused not only by the fiendish drug users, but also by those people who, having heard that it was stylish to be opposed to drugs, are protesting against their use, but in reality are doping themselves and their children with mixtures, which they do not call medicines. The modern pediatrician who claims "not to give many medicines", but who has chosen a few which he prescribes in all forms to every one of his little patients, is just as guilty as the outright old-fashioned doctor. And so is the ignoramus who calls himself nature doctor and his stuff "herbs" instead of "medicines".

How can one be indifferent to this condition of affairs, when one is convinced that medicaments (of which a few are sometimes useful and should be given

in very rare cases only) are generally hurtful, and when one thinks how often the beginnings of a chronic constipation in children are to be traced to the castor oil so profusely administered to them, the inception being sometimes in the first day of their life? Tuberculosis of the lungs may be due to the reliance on cough-drops and other narcotic and soothing medicines which cause the neglect of taking the proper preventive and timely curative measures. The same may be said about the so-called tonics and blood medicines, the appetizing drops, the nerve remedies, and so on *ad nauseam*. Millions of lives have been and are being sacrificed to the greed of some drug manufacturers and of their partners, the newspapers, all criminals, without regard to the high sounding names of the true or fake indorsers of the drugs and without regard to the political standard of the papers! More millions of lives are being crippled through drugs, commencing from infancy, than through all the wars combined!

Surgical Operations.—Who can deny the wonderful results of the marvelous progress of surgery in the last century? Yet, in some respects the advancement in surgical technique, skill and knowledge has done and is doing also much harm. After all, surgeons are human beings, and, except a few, not superior beings, not supermen. They are not always at the summit of knowledge of their specialty, they are rarely as capable and as conscientious as they are required to be, they seldom belong to the specimens of humanitarians who have solely the interest of their patients at heart.

Others make involuntary and unintentional mistakes, not to speak of the inherent errors of surgery as such, especially in the cases when the operation is but a palliative and when it does not even touch the cause of the evil. Besides, surgery has the misfortune of being able to do too much; because of the existence of anaesthesia and aseptic methods, many surgeons have the audacity to undertake works which do immense harm

Many operations in the nose, throat, etc., of children are done without sufficient deliberation, without an effort at more conservative, if slower, treatment.

The more cultured an individual, the easier he submits to an operation, because he has a holy respect for anything which looks and sounds scientific. When some simple illiterate women rioted, some years ago, in front of the public schools, as it has happened repeatedly in this country, because their children's tonsils had to be extirpated more or less indiscriminately, they were held in great contempt; and yet in a number of instances I had the occasion to convince myself that thev were right.

Fads.—The medical profession is unjust in its ignorance of all the knowledge to be gained from those cutside it who have new medical theories. There is truth in osteopathy, in chiropractic, in christian science, but, on the other hand, it is a great mistake to herald these fads as sciences. Each of these schools presupposes one cause or so for almost all bodily troubles and treats them with one-sided remedies,—which is in itself

a monstrosity. Except this, these professions are composed of men and women the great majority of whom lack the proper education and have studied their specialty within a short time. The fact that their criticism of the regular medical profession is partly right gives them the possibility of being more dishonest than those whom they criticize, a possibility of which many take advantage.

Parents must be extremely careful to whom they entrust their sick child. I know that this advice, not giving them a definite idea as to how they should act and what exactly they should avoid, is unsatisfactory. But we live in a transitory medical period, and fairness dictates not to be too accurate in indicating our preferences. The people should be warned, but further investigation and choice should remain with them.

The Senses.—If necessary the senses could be trained. There are worked-out methods for that purpose and special methods for individual children may be evolved. The eyesight, the sense of touch, of taste, of smell, of hearing may be perfected to a high degree through plays and games in which the respective organs are put to such pleasurable work in which strain and effort is avoided

Too much physical and mental strain as well as frequent punishment and fear of punishment seem to be among the causes of *myopia.*

Gibberish Talk.—If you wish that the child should talk early and well and that he should not have a

hard time correcting his speech later, if you wish to prevent speech defects, talk to the baby clearly, distinctly, exactly, slowly and as correctly as possible.

Speech Defects, particularly *stammering*, are due to a combination of causes, which differ from case to case, but which consist mostly of: severe punishments, fear at home and in school, the difficulty of changing the first incorrect talk learned as a baby into the more correct talk needed later, instinctive imitation of other stammerers and too much self-consciousness while talking.

Consequently defective speech may be prevented if the society of stammerers is avoided, if deliberate talk is used with the child from babyhood, if we insist, without attracting his attention too much to that, that he, as soon as he is able to talk, pronounce every word distinctly, carefully and never hastily; if we bring him up without the fear of punishments and without maltreatment, so that his nervous system remain intact.

Physical punishments are not only unwise, unjust, ineffective and mentally harmful; they are also injurious to the body. To hit a child means to hurt him somewhere, and if the parent's temper becomes ungovernable and uncontrollable, he is never certain how hard his blow will be and where it will land. I have seen and treated children injured by their fathers and mothers in the most cruel manner; almost any organ or part of the body may be wounded.

Big, callous palms and the dorsal parts of the hands;

clenched, bony fists as hard as a hammer; feet with the shoes on; rulers; wooden sticks and rods; iron tools; lashing leather belts; free swinging boots; switching whips; the cat o' nine tails; regular rope; kitchen utensils; bottles, etc., are a few of the more prevalent objects used to "subdue" and "teach" the child. Pinching him; biting him; throwing him violently against the wall, against the edge of the table; pushing him down the stairs; flogging him after he fell and because he hurt himself, instead of consoling him,—are frequent events and popular procedures. Fractures, luxations, hemorrhages, tooth extractions, deformations, bruises, cuts, lacerations and sometimes direct or indirect chronic diseases and death are the consequences. Many permanent deformities, many disfigured faces and misshapen noses are the result of these delicate methods which have their defenders among so-called educators. The more deliberate and calculated tortures,—as to kneel on pebbles for hours; to stay in the corner looking to the wall; to be locked in in the toilet or in a dark room, that is, a room without light and fresh air, which are so essential to health, or in the clothes closet; to write a word three hundred times; to be kept in the house instead of going out for play and walk; to be deprived of food, etc.,—all these heinous tortures are injurious to the body in one way or in another and have the effect of wrecking the nervous system temporarily or permanently.

Fear.—Fight fear, unwarranted and unjustifiable fear, as much as possible, as it could lead to illness as

well as to mental abnormalities. When something has frightened the child, never leave in his mind a doubt about it. Show him the object which scared him, and explain him why it did.

Habit Movements.—Habit movements, also called spasms or *tics convulsifs*, are mostly acquired by imitation. They should not be neglected, as they may last a long time and may result in hideous and grotesque distortions of the face. They may begin with a slight pressure of the eyelids, which may increase little by little in intensity and frequency. Later other portions of the face become affected and get twisted at regular intervals into funny contortions and grimaces. Often the shoulders, the neck and the arms take part in the performance. Explain the child what the consequences might be and how ugly these habits are, appeal to his will-power, to his bravery, to fight the habits.

Little girls, seeing the attention paid by everybody to a woman with a hysterical attack, often simulate hysteria until they have real spells. Of course, hysteria is due to a certain physical and mental condition of the patient, but imitation is often a contributory cause. Talk to them seriously before it is too late; do not ignore or disregard such a condition. And also be sure that you, the parents, especially the mothers, are not too fussy about disease and do not delight in being a petted victim of sickness or an imitator of others whose sole distinction consists of being ill.

Perhaps I may add here that to let the children remain with the habit of carrying an artificial nipple

between their lips until they are quite old (sometimes one sees them with it at the age of five or six), is a mistake both from the mental and physical standpoint. In fact, such a nipple should never be given to any child.

Clothes.—As to clothes, I just want to remind the parents that the child is not an adult and that he must not be dressed according to our standards as to what is good for him. Sometimes we are right, but more often we are worng. The child may not feel cold when we do; he may feel warm when we don't. He may need less clothes than we in a cold day.

Naked legs as a winter *style* sometimes are another way of making the child suffer. If he complains that his legs are cold, he should wear stockings; if he is satisfied with his bare legs, let him have his way.

Most of the children, especially boys, hate hats; let them have their heads free and let the breeze blow freshness into their hair. Of course, they should have a hat or cap when necessary, that is, when the skull is exposed for a very long time to the sun or the ears to the frost. But if the child has become accustomed to cold and sunshine and does not mind them, *you* should not mind it either. By the way, wearing a hat is largely a matter of convention, as it is evidenced by the fact that we wear it when going out in the evening when there are no sun rays to disturb us. We are more utilitarian with umbrellas than with hats. For adults it may be more difficult to go about hatless than to expound original ideas; but fortunately it is not

so for children. Besides, of late I have become more and more convinced that to be often bare-headed, that is to expose the head to much light and sunshine (not extremely so!) is healthy for the hair.

As often and as much as possible keep your baby completely naked and let the larger child, particularly if you live in the country, stay undressed as long as it is feasible. Let their bodies bathe in the air. It is healthy for them.

Bathing.—A normal child should get used to cold baths from babyhood. They are invigorating, stimulating. They should be taken summer and winter. Of course, this does not mean that warm and lukewarm baths are not recommended, when needed. By a cold bath I mean one whose temperature is below 65 degrees Fahrenheit; various degrees of cool baths between 65 and 75 d. F.; various degrees of lukewarm between 75 and 90 d. F.; warm above 90 d. F. As may be seen, my gradation differs somewhat from the usual one, as found in some books on the subject.

Air.—Parents who keep their children too much in the house prepare them for consumption, anemia, indigestion and other troubles. The child needs the great outdoors as much as possible, which, however, does not signify that it is good for him, as it is often seen, to play in the street until eleven o'clock in the evening and later, when he should be fast asleep in his bed. The child's bedroom should be as sunny and as airy as possible. Do not forget that his whole future physical frame, much of his health condition as

a man, depends on his present life. Do not bargain with the windows, keep them well open and the child's bed near the window and where a moderate draft changes the air constantly. In cold nights he should be warmly dressed, wrapped and covered; he should feel warm, but the inhaled air should be cool or cold. If you have but few rooms, let the best ones be the sleeping rooms.

Do not forget that the fact that the child has had fresh air during his vacation in the country or for a few hours in the park, does not preclude the necessity of his breathing fresh air later. He needs it *always;* he needs a vacation every day.

As many school teachers are still uneducated concerning fresh air and as many of them are so lightly dressed that they cannot stand the open window in the winter, it is the duty of intelligent parents to supervise the class room and to do all in their power in order to improve it. Often children become dull and debile, and sometimes ill, on account of improperly ventilated class rooms. It should be borne in mind that of all the ventilating systems, the best, the most effective is the simplest, the open window. This has been found out by experiments and by practice.

Food.—Fancy food, white bread, polished rice, white crackers, etc., are unhealthy foods; they may please a corrupt palate, they may even still the hunger, but they do not feed a child sufficiently, they do not give him all the strength that he is entitled to get from the food. The simplest foods and combinations are the best.

Destroying a few food superstitions: It is wrong to believe that fruit and milk eaten together are harmful and that starchy food combined with fruit is harmful. Sugar, candies, ice-cream are *good* for children. I repeat, they are good! It is foolish to think that all children, the world over, are eternally conspiring to bother their parents for sweets; sweets are a great necessity for the child. Nor are the teeth spoiled by confections. The teeth decay because the parents are careless and fail to clean them, or on account of other sins of hygiene. Hard eggs are not difficult to digest and are not dangerous. Fruits and nuts of all sorts, so much craved by children, are wonderfully healthy and indispensable foods for children of all ages. This includes the much dreaded, but very nourishing and health giving banana and the much calumniated peanut; also the cherry, plum, strawberry and other berries. Starchy foods are wholesome and good in every respect. A child needs less protein food than the books usually recommend. Milk is good, but it is easy to take too much of it, because it is a very nourishing and *liquid*, not solid and bulky, food. If a child drinks much milk, do not complain of his "lack of appetite"; he is unable to eat much of other food. If a child likes no milk, do not force him to drink it; replace it by other food. What I just said about milk, may be said about eggs. If the child dislikes cooked food, there is no harm; he can find sufficient raw (that is, sun cooked) food which may be just as good or better. Mothers, do not be conceited; your cooking may not be as good as you think, after all; besides, it is a mat-

ter of taste, and he has a right to his own taste, he does not need to have yours. Always mind the child's taste, if possible, and try to find out what he likes. If a child refuses soup or broth, do not provoke a scandal; the usual soups are not worth it, as they generally contain very little real food. There is no harm if a child makes sometimes a meal out of sweets alone or of fruit alone, without any other addition. If you see that the child likes his food without salt, do not salt it for him. Not only raw fruit is good for almost all normal children, but some of the raw vegetables are also to be recommended. Yet very few mothers allow their children to eat them. Rarely will a mother permit her child to eat a raw, teeth-strengthening, healthy carrot in preference to her mushy, boiled, spoiled, fattened, sugared, prepared carrot. Is it not because she subconsciously feels that if the child can eat many raw foods, he will need her much less?

A child can live and develop perfectly well without meat or fish or anything made of them. Vegetarian parents are often advised to the contrary when consulting meat eating physicians; but the latter just repeat what they have heard or read and none of them or their authorities have ever given vegetarianism an impartial and fair and sufficiently long trial.

It is wrong to prohibit children, as some authors do, raw and ripe tomatoes (which are excellent for everybody), cucumbers, celery and sweet potatoes.

Water drinking should never be denied a child. It is not true that it is harmful to drink when one perspires or when one has fever; on the contrary, it is abso-

lutely necessary and healthy, the belief to the contrary dating from previous generations of physicians, who, thinking that they must forbid what their patients wanted and must force them to take what they felt like refusing, denied fresh air to the consumptive and gave much food to those who could not take any at all.

Coffee, tea, spices, alcoholic drinks of all sorts, if taken in abundance, or even moderately but frequently, are harmful to adults and children alike, but particularly to children. Do not eat and drink these things yourself and do not teach them their use, as far as it depends on you.

Never coax your child to eat or drink hot food. Many of our diseases are due to burning our digestive tube, including the mouth, with food of an abnormally high temperature. We easily get into the habit of swallowing soup which is hotter than our stomach can tolerate and which children, if left to themselves, would never accept. Intelligent parents should understand that no food is less or more nourishing because of a difference of temperature and should allow their children to eat cold food if they so desire.

The reason why most of the false food beliefs, of which only a few have just been mentioned here, have originated and taken root, lies in the fact that the bad effects of OVEREATING have been mistaken for the effects of the foods and considered as arising from the foods as such, and attributed to them. I have no doubt that overeating in adult life with all its train of suffering and disease and its toll of death, is due to the criminal, although well-intentioned, habit of

mothers to force or coax their babies and children to eat more than they want or to eat at the time when they desire no food.

No harm can result if you heed the following advices and rules:

Do not nurse or feed the baby more often than six times in twenty-four hours; usually four times will do. The child over two years should never be fed more than four times and the tendency should be to reduce the meals to three in twenty-four hours. A child of school age who does not care for breakfast, will fare better if he eats but twice daily. Better less meals and good digestion than more meals and poor digestion. Just introducing food into the stomach is not the object of eating; eating without digesting—without digesting thoroughly—is not only useless, but harmful. Let all the desired food, including fruits, nuts, sweets, etc., be consumed at the meal and *nothing* between meals. All fruits are food—orange too, mothers!—and should be considered as such. Do not hurry the child to eat for fear of his missing school. Slow eating and good chewing is more important than going to school. Eating hastily is bad at any time. Never force a child to eat. He must be hungry, really hungry, to eat. Give the children sufficient fruits or sweets at the table and they will not eat them surreptitiously and in too large a quantity and so suffer from indigestion. Let the illegal become legal. But at the meal, leave enough space for the fruits and sweets; do not force the children to satiate themselves first fully with other foods, as this would result

in overeating. Eating without a real desire for food is also overeating. Whether we eat too much of one kind of food or of a few foods together, the result is the same; it is overeating, and we pay dear for it. To underfeed the child for fear of overfeeding him is also wrong, but this is rare, the mothers having rather an opposite tendency. If a child changes the accepted order of the foods in a repast, do not interfere, no matter how odd or bizarre it seems to you. It is only a matter of taste. In the alimentary tract all the foods are soon mixed and separated according to other rules than those laid down by us. Overeating and constipation are the direct causes of the majority of those diseases which are due to our own fault, and chronic constipation is often a consequence of chronic overeating. It is sufficient to overeat once in about ten days to be *always* ill, as we become ill again before our former illness is healed. Overeating is one of the causes of obesity, and stoutness is always abnormal, as our natural condition is to be lean. Often it is also the cause of underweight and general weakness, as it results in intoxication. Do not always accuse the food as such when your child suffers from indigestion; see if he did not overeat; he can become ill from the *best* food, if he eats *too much* of it or if he eats when he has no business to eat, and his illness consists then of auto-intoxication. When a child is ill, he should fast completely, except for water. And lastly, do not consider any rules, not even these, as eternal and unchangeable verities. Use your judgment.

Defecation and Urination.—Instruct the children

never to postpone the satisfaction of these needs. Show them how inesthetic and immoral (from a health standpoint) it is to keep in one's body longer than it is necessary that which is unclean, poisonous and destined to be eliminated.

Enuresis Nocturna.—Bed wetting is rarely an effect of ill health; it is mostly a result of wrong up-bringing. Do not use the drugs commonly prescribed for this habit. They are unnecessary and harmful. Nor will punishments be of any help; if anything, they will make matters worse. If the child is old enough to understand you, talk to him and explain him his condition until you get his collaboration. During the day, that is, when he is conscious, let him train his sphincter by keeping his urine back for a few minutes when he feels like voiding it, until his subconscious mind will be conquered. (If you are attentive, you will find that there is no real contradiction between this sentence and the above last paragraph!) Come to the child's aid in the following manner: Regulate his meals so that the last one be about three or four hours before his going to bed and that it be composed of as little liquid or thirst producing aliments as possible. Let him have all the milk he wants at other meals, but not a drop of it at the evening meal. No sharp and spiced foods at any time. Not much playing in the evening; avoid water drinking before going to bed. Be sure to have the child urinate before he goes to bed. The air in the sleeping room should be fresh. Let the foot side of his bed be elevated about eight inches above its head;

some wooden blocks may be used. This will have the effect of partly unloading the lower portion of the bladder and reduce the pressure upon its orifice into the urethra. Daily general lukewarm baths with short cold sprays over the inferior abdominal wall, that is, the bladder region. For some time, waking up the child for urination once or twice during the night, will be necessary. Be sure that the bowel movements are correct.

Health Habits.—Parents should see that they themselves get as much health information as possible and then impart it to their child. Teach him correct and rational health habits and respect for his body, as well as a certain degree of trust and faith in its vital forces, especially when fighting disease. But do not fall into the extreme of over-emphasizing the importance of the body as such or of idolizing it. Never fail to impress the child with the value of the mind as guiding and strongly influencing the bodily organs in health and disease. And let him try to gain powerful muscles but not to worship the body so much as to use all his energy for the purpose of becoming an extraordinarily strong, sportive, athletic individual only, to the exclusion of all mental pleasures and artistic necessities.

Let the child become imbued with the need of *internal* cleanliness, so that, while he will appreciate the necessity of external cleanliness, as of his room, his clothes, his skin, he will not be satisfied with this, but eat, breathe, live so, that his lungs, stomach and

blood be as clean as possible. Let us bring up a generation with a desire for cleanliness of the deepest things and they will cleanse society of all its dirt!

Avoid to let too much fear of disease and disease symptoms as well as of microbes, flies, etc., creep into the child's mind. It may become an irrational fear that will be impossible to eradicate. And the results may be disastrous.

When the child is ill, do not make more fuss over his sickness than it is necessary. Let him despise the present prevailing ethics of disease; let him be for the ethics of health,—a health enthusiast. Let him be *ashamed to be ill.* Let the next generations be ashamed of disease, individually and socially, and they will do all in their power to eliminate its individual and social causes.

The following preface has been received too late to be placed at the front of the book, where it belongs. Therefore it is printed here. Since many years its authors have been among the very few believers in libertarian and rational education and—what is very rare—have practiced what they have believed.

December 24, 1921.

Through our experiences we have commenced to doubt the value of books and lectures on education as means of enlightenment, because it seems almost as if only those understand who do not need the preachment. If this should be true, then this book will be one of the many contributions to education that will interest those who like to find corroboration for their own beliefs or knowledge, but will be a closed book to those whom we are most desirous of reaching.

However, this is a debatable subject, and there are still those earnest seekers who, agreeing with Dr. Liber in general, will want to know the best ways and means.

It has been a disappointment to us to find thinking people, radicals and liberals, lacking in an understanding of the growing needs of the child. When sensible people go into the chicken raising business, or stock raising or the breeding of puppies, they usually try to acquire as much information on the subject as possible. But when the first child is born into the home he usually enters a world of ignorance as to his real needs, and probably he will have to pay the

penalty for the lack of knowledge on the part of his parents, though they may be over-zealous about his physical care.

As in Dickens' novels we found the "story" more interesting as we read on, so we would advise inquirers not to stop at the first page or two for fear Dr. Liber has set down only a series of "don'ts".

One will have to go a long way to find another book expressive of such refined sentiments, recording such sympathetic observations and giving such intelligent advice as is found in these pages. It is quite evident that Dr. Liber is by temperament a child's man as well as a true physician. To him, the child, the human being is something more than a mammal. There is in the child something worth striving for—something which spells hope for the future. To him, apparently, the child is not merely an embryonic successful business man, but one who may have something from within to express, something worth developing.

Not until you get into the essays on sex education will you strike this sentence, which contains good advice in regard to any teaching:

"Answer the child's questions truthfully and simply, but never more than he desires to know." And the last three paragraphs of the essays on "Religious Ideas" should be read by most radicals and liberals. In fact we would place them at the beginning of the essays.

In the old-fashioned conservative home the child was kept in the back-ground, but in the modern liberal home it is likely that he is too much in the foreground. Instead of being given all the freedom that is con-

sistent with the fretdom of his parents, he is permitted to monopolize that precious article, resulting in his acquiring an inflated sense of his superiority or importance; to be followed by an unexpected jolt when he steps out into the world as one of many, and where he may have to prove himself in one way or another, before homage will be paid him.

For those who are fearful of curtailing a child's freedom by any form of denial there is this paragraph: "Right from the beginning learn to accord the child cheerfully all that you could or should grant him and to refuse him sternly and energetically all his impossible and unreasonable requests."

Possibly we might use the word "positively" in place of the words "sternly and energetically", but the main thing is that he shall know from experience and the positive tone of the voice that a refusal means a refusal. To be positive is not necessarily to be harsh.

*When Dr. Liber says that "sugar, candies, ice cream are good for children" we wonder if he should not have explained the difference between sugar and sugar. Is not pure white sugar as much denatured as pure white flour? And most cheap candies and some that are not cheap are flavored and colored with coal-tar extracts and commercial ice creams contain glue besides starch and coal-tar colorings. Much more might be said on this subject and possibly Dr. Liber will take it up in some later edition.**

Prefaces are not usually read; but in case someone should happen to be curious enough to read this preface let us call this sentence to his attention so that

he may be impressed with it when he reads it again:

"The more you help a child the more helpless he will be."

We may finish by saying that we have our doubts about the child owing the parents "friendship and affection"—but the rest of the paragraph so modifies the statement that Dr. Liber may be forgiven for making it.

ELIZABETH BYRNE FERM.
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Principal Teachers, Ferrer Modern School, Stelton, N. J.

**From the author of "The Child and the Home":* We find adulteration in all foods, but this book is not the place where its details can be described. Parents who wish to learn the difference between good and bad sugar or candies, will get information from other sources. What I meant to emphasize was that sweets as such, if not eaten in too large quantities and if not eaten after one is satiated with other food, are not harmful to normal children and should not be forbidden. Sugar, candies, ice-cream as such, are good foods and may take the place of other food or form meals by themselves. The parents who do not allow their use (and so force the child to eat them in secret and illegitimately and to eat too much of them) would prohibit them even in the case of the purest sweets. By the way, while all adulterations are swindles and should not be tolerated, I do not believe that there is much harm in the above-mentioned extracts, glues or colorings.

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(A few of many letters of praise)

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I am reading R. L. with real interest.—L. D. Abbott (Writer, Leader of Radical Thought.)

I like your journal very much. The matter therein is strongly presented and I particularly like your clear short sentence style.—Ch. Owen, New York (Editor The Messenger, a Magazine for Colored People.)

Your magazine is filling a much needed want. You combine in it knowledge, the truth and the courage which has been lacking in similar publications heretofore. At last we have a magazine which is calling "a spade a spade", yet is constructive in its work. You are doing one of the greatest works that are done today in America; you are putting the tools of education where they should be.—Richard Mayer, Boston (Cotton Merchant.)

R. L. fills a long-felt want in health literature.—J. Martin, Chicago (I. W. W. Leader.)

R. L. is a valiant attempt to stimulate interest on many questions of primary importance—health, fitness, eugenics, procreation, and disease prevention.—*The Worker's Dreadnought*, London, England.

A magazine in handy octavo, typographically excellent, full of good reading material. The editor, Dr. B. Liber, cannot be exactly labeled in his radicalism. He is essentially an eclectic, trying to absorb and popularize the most vital ideas in all systems of advanced thought. R. L. strives to cover the whole range of life. It deals ably and in lucid, popular style with the problems of health, particularly those affecting the life of workers. An implacable foe to the commercializing tendencies that are entering the service of health, it exposes and brands all kinds of quackery and humbug. It is down on patent medicines and widely advertised cure-alls. It recommends sanitation and prevention of disease as far more useful than drugs. At the same time it proposes a profound belief in vegetarianism, both from the medical and the humanitarian viewpoint. The range of Rational Living is not limited to health alone. It includes art, literature, economics, politics, morality. The reader may once in a while differ with the views presented, but

he will invariably feel that they express an honest opinion. The service derived from the perusal of that lively monthly messenger is worth many times the financial expense.—*N. Y. Call Magazine.*

After having been a subscriber to almost every health magazine published in the U. S. for the last 25 years yours appeals to me as the ablest of all.—M. BOAS, Coreys, N. Y.

We quote and translate very freely from R. L. Indeed we find most of your work so interesting that we cannot resist the pleasure of translating it for the benefit of our readers.—E. M. OSIER, Valencia, Spain (One of the Editors of "Helios", a Spanish "Vegetarian-Naturist" Magazine.)

I want to write you a line of comradely greetings and tell you that we appreciate the work you are doing in your magazine and will be glad to boost it. R. L. is eminently worthy of survival and Mrs. Kate Richards O'Hare and I will do what we can to help it along.—F. P. O'HARE, Girard, Kansas (One of the Editors of "The National Rip-Saw".

The friends your magazine makes seem to be of the type that the Russian journalists used to call "reader-friends". They come to enquire weeks ahead before the magazine comes in.—M. N. MAISEL, New York (Book Dealer and Publisher.)

R. L. is truly a great magazine, one of the very best..—W. MERCHANT, New York.

I cannot express in words the great good R. L. has been and will be to the people, for it is the most honest health paper printed that teaches the right way of living; and it should be in every home.—B. C. BLAKE, Charlevoix, Mich.

I wish to congratulate you upon your splendid achievement; your magazine is a revelation, and if "*mens sana in corpore sano*" be a true saying, as I believe it is, R. L. is the most fundamental step in the right direction within this last decade. Radical organizations of all shades could do no more useful work than to boost the circulation of your magazine.—A. MARKY, Suffern, N. Y.

You make us realize that there is more in the question of health than we are apt to think.—F. SPER, Brooklyn, N. Y.

R. L. is like a clear spring of clean truth in a desert of falsehood. It helps me to live right.—O. W. EVANS, Tobar, Nev.

Each issue that I have seen I recognize as of unusual value—and the very best of all the health publications.—A. PARK, Palo Alto, Cal.

I wish to compliment you for the rich contents of the last number, which is a real source of intelligent information upon the most vital and most neglected subject—health, physical as well as spiritual. I consider your achievements in this field of the greatest importance for a saner and healthier society.—M. BELLITT, Los Angeles, Cal. (Secretary, Los Angeles Vegetarian Society.)

Articles from Rational Living have been reprinted by a number of publications in various countries.

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